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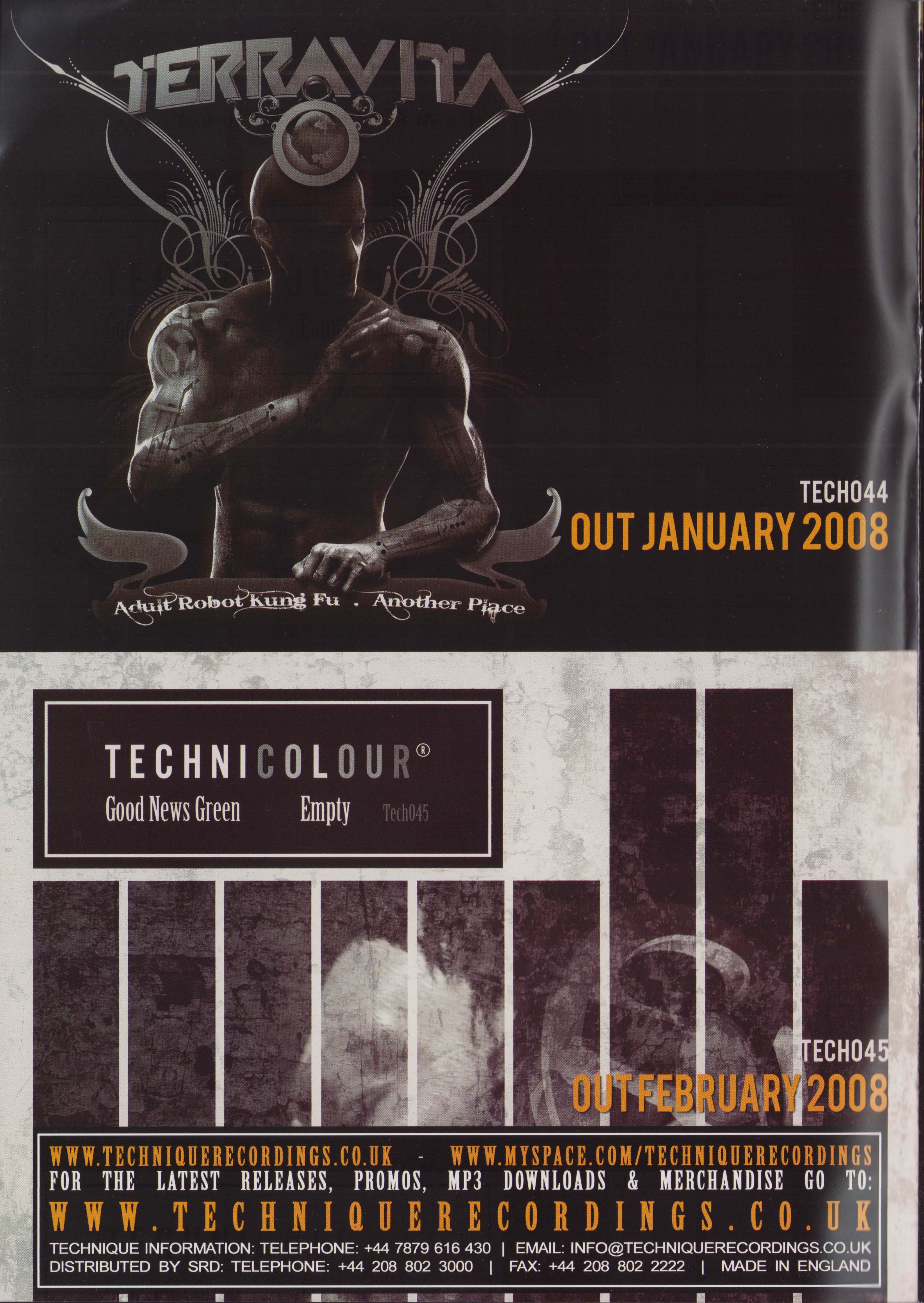

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ATM WORLDWIDE
THE DRUM & BASS AND UNDERGROUND MUSIC CULTURE PAGES

EDITOR'S NOTE

By the time you read this it will be early 2008 and all of the annual festive hype and over-indulgence in booze, food and whatever other vices you may have, will have well and truly taken their toll. Some of the brave amongst you may even be considering a hardcore detox regime (how long it lasts is another thing) and shock, horror a trip or two to the gym. As the advert at our local gym says, "The more you work out, the more curry you can eat." Replace curry with ice-cream, cakes, roast dinners, dim sum or indeed any other culinary delight and all of a sudden jogging on a treadmill doesn't seem so pointless when there's a big plate of rice and peas at the end of it.

With the recent launch of the download site www.abunchofcuts.com (no laughing at the back), labels like 31 Records, Bassbin, Soul:R and Signature have joined forces to supply their music old and new on MP3 format. It's clear that drum and bass, one of the last bastions of vinyl, has fully embraced all of the formats of the modern world. It's not a case of deserting vinyl; it's still shifting decent units and we still receive big packets of the black stuff on a regular basis, while house, techno and pretty much most other genres have long used CD/MP3 as their mail-out of choice. Drum and bass vinyl will always have its place, it's just becoming more of a niche market, a place where MP3's will eventually take the lion's share and promoters will bill their DJs playing "100% authentic vinyl sets" (like back in the day!) as a selling point.

So what's in store for ATM in 2008? Well you can expect all the latest news, reviews and features, to keep you in touch with what's burning hot in the independent music industry. We're also extending our coverage and the range of music we cover, so for example, check the Jill Scott interview in this very issue (page 16-17). We've got some very exciting plans in store for 2008 and beyond. Keep your ears to the ground.

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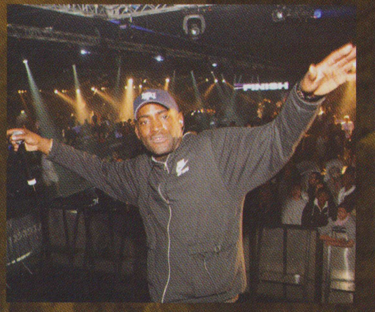


STEREO PANDA '08

As you might have witnessed at a couple raves around the country, the French touch is not only synonymous with daft cut-up electronica anymore. Enter French streetwear brand, Stereo Panda. Already supporting and collaborating with drum and bass' finest including Baby Origami, CIA Records, Craggz and Parallel Forces and Jenna G (they even helped design her stage corsets for her appearances with Shapeshifters), the boombox-armed, blinkin' furry ball is expanding its territory at an alarming rate.

Growing from its BMX background and roots, the brand is clearly influenced by vintage Japanese and American cultures using bold graphics and colours to get its point across. For Spring/Summer '08, Stereo Panda is going back to its acne fed years having an overdose of Miami Vice and MTV Yo Rap! It's '91 all over again! Dreams of sun, palm trees, crazy flavoured ice creams, sunglasses and Tron at the movies, the panda is using bold stripes, fat all over prints and flashy colours to keep it classy.

Beyond dope tee shirts logos, the brand's freshness is spreading across polos, zippers, sweaters and accessories including the original sunglasses belt. Living the dream. Living it all the way. **www.stereopanda.com**

IPOD DOCK COMPETITON

iPod docking station manufactures iHome have come up with a novel new use for your iPod. The iH8 is a dual alarm clock and radio that simultaneously charges your iPod whilst you sleep. The best feature of this docking station, which has integrated speakers, is the remote control which allows users to control all the major functions of the iPod as well as work the radio and alarm. Check out www.ihomeintl.com to get hold of one. Also available from iHome is the iH19, a compact and sturdy sound system specially designed to be a portable but beefy docking system for any iPod.

If you simply can't wait, ATM has been lucky enough to lay hands on a couple of units to give a way to our lucky readers. To win one simply tell us:

in what year the iPod was launched?

Please send your answer to: **comp@atm-mag.com** stating IPod in the subject line.

NOM*D BOMBSHELL

New Zealand's Nom*d's Spring / Summer range is about to hit the UK. Since its inception in 1986 Nom*d has maintained its credibility as a label totally unaffected by trends, instead they've adopted the cool, considered gaze of the fashion outsider.

Their new range 'Operation Bombshell' combines iconic silhouettes from the 1950s with Nom*d's androgynous edge. The collection seems fragile and feminine but things are not as they appear. Some fabrics are overprinted with loaded dice and as always the overall palette is anchored with black. The range covers skirts, waistcoats and vests, singlets, scarves and bloomers. There are five t-shirt prints for the season, four of H-Bomb tests and the others including a stencilled spy print proclaiming 'Nom*D exposed'.

Nom*d have firmly established themselves as the dark intellectual purveyors of quality. They are now synonymous with New Zealand design as Concord Dawn are to world wide drum and bass. More Info @ **www.nomd.co.nz**

THE END IN CYBERSPACE

The End has just launched a completely revamped website, with a brand new design, layout and heaps more to get involved with. The new site is updated weekly with content including DJ interviews, features, photo diaries from parties all over the world, blogs on film and music, mixes, downloads, DJ city guides and much more.

As well as including pieces from key End DJs, the site will be opened up to include articles about a wider range of topics and artists, and will feature contributions from key figures in the music, clubbing, bar and film industry.

The new site is a step away from the traditional club website format, to include more music, more photos, and more interaction with the DJs. The site opened with Richie Hawtin and DJ Zinc interviews, a photo diary from DJ Marky and Stamina MC on tour, a Ram Records video feature, Erol Alkan sharing his Secret London with us and video interviews from Ben Westbeech, Kieran Hebden, Commix, James Holden and many more.

The weekly music blog has already had contributions from the likes of Gilles Peterson, Renegade Hardware boss Clayton Hines and Mr C who have shared their musical wisdom and ramblings with the world.

In the website's first month alone, drum & bass content has featured heavily on the site, with video interviews added with Alix Perez, Spectrasoul, Fabio and Shy FX plus sets recorded live at the club from the likes of Calyx & Teebee, Artificial Intelligence and an alternative set from DJ Marky. There's much, much more to come in the forthcoming months!

NATIONAL D&B AWARDS 2008

After last years sell out event at Air superclub, Birmingham the awards are back once again bigger, bolder and stronger. The media attention at last year's awards was immense; the event was filmed by Channel 4, and featured in The Sun and regional newspapers with further coverage on TV Central news for the Midlands by BBC Radio1's Fabio and Grooverider.

This year the National Drum & Bass Awards is supported by MTV Dance. MTV Dance has dedicated a weekly hour-long show, strictly covering drum and bass, leading up to the event. MTV will be sponsoring the best drum and bass dance award at this year's awards ceremony, they will also be screening coverage of the awards on the station after the event itself. Support from various other organisations for the 2008 awards is immense they include Movement, Innovation, Kool FM, ATM, Metropolis and Knowledge too name a few.

The National Drum and Bass Awards 2008 are to be held in the heart of the UK, Birmingham. Not only are the awards to be held in Birmingham, but also at the legendary Q Club. The Q Club is the stuff of dance music legend, an immense 3,000 capacity it's one of the finest clubbing venues in the UK. Vote online: **www.drumandbassawards.co.uk**

DNAUDIO

The first album on DNAudio, 'Hard Times' will be released this Spring. The package will include a barrage of new material from the label's usual suspects, some guest appearances, remixes and even a divergence into the techno-realm. Out now are the fantastic DNAudio T-shirts designed by Devolution Design. Resolute Music is a new label launched by Squire of DNAudio. The first release, a collab by Hungarian Mindscape and Aussie producer Safire is 'Heatstroke' and 'Malfunction'. Already being spun by Calyx. Teebee. Friction, Klute and Bailey, this is one for the box.

FABRICLIVE GOES DUBSTEP

FabricLive have released the 37th mix CD of their legendary series. The first ever dubstep mix comes from Dub Police and Sub Soldier regulators, Caspa & Rusko. Featuring exclusive tracks from the lads themselves as well as Skream and the Digital Mystikz, this release is out now and reviewed this issue!

WATCH THE RIDE

The D&B mix market has become big business and following on from exclusive mixes from Zinc and the TC 'Watch The Ride' release, we've heard news that none other than Welsh drum and bass superstar High Contrast is lined up for the next one released through Harmless at some point in March.

SCOTLAND IS EXPLICIT

Scottish ravers will be well aware Xplicit are the biggest d'n'b promoters in the country. Xplicit celebrate their 3rd Birthday on 25th Jan 2008 at Potterrow in Edinburgh Uni, with Shy FX, Noisia, Sub Focus, Eno, Paul Reset. The event is hosted by Eksman, Tonn Piper & BZ. In Feb Xplicit will feature Dieselboy.

DON'T STAY IN

Clubbing portal Don't Stay In launched their e-ticketing system in July 2007 and it has been a runaway success with clubs such as Pacha, Slinky and Air making the most of the scheme. They will be working with some of the biggest names in the festival business for 2008. For promoters and clubbers alike Don't Stay In is well worth checking out. www.dontstayin.com

NACH KE

Rising star D-Boy has released his new bouncy bhangra single 'Nach Ke' (to dance) from his forthcoming album, 'Playback'. Featuring vocalists V Dubl E and Swiss and fusing hip-hop with bhangra and Bollywood elements this track has an accompanying video shot in Hollywood!

LOOPMASTER: MARSHALL JEFFERSON

Volume 3 in the artist series sample packs 'Loopmasters' is 'House Generation' from Chicago house legend, Marshall Jefferson. A central figure in the Chicago house scene, Marshall produced seminal house anthems including 'Move Your Body', '7 Ways to Jack' and 'Open Our Eyes'. Working alongside Frankie Knuckles, Steve Silk, Felix Da Housecat and more this sample pack is not to be missed. The samples are formatted to work with pretty much any production package.

SAMPLED FROM STAKKA

Veteran of the D&B scene, Stakka, has put together a D&B sample pack for sample library company, Digital Redux. Entitled 'DnB 4 The Headz' this is a useful resource for any budding producer. With 2.44 GB of audio including beats, percussion loops, bass, stabs and atmospheric strings and synths. Find it at www.digital-redux.com.

UTAH JAZZ

Busy as ever Utah Jazz has a string of releases lined up for the New Year. On Good Looking comes 'Money's One Thing' featuring MC Conrad, on Creative Source is 'Back In Time' on white label is Utah Jazz vs Nate Dogg 'Regulate' whilst over on Innerground is Utah Jazz vs Soulmatic 'Funkless Life'. Jazz has also made a collaboration with clothing firm Maharishi, so watch out for some new threads in forthcoming photo shoots.

THTC VS ZULU NATION

Eco street-wear specialists THTC have joined forces with hip-hop legends Zulu Nation to produce a limited edition range of ethically produced hemp garments to coincide with the anniversary of the birth of hip-hop. With new standards in conscious-led design, Zulu Nation (the brain-child of Afrika Bambaataa) is the perfect partner for THTC. Not only are these garms ethical, they look pretty fresh too. www.ththc.co.uk

TEMPORARITIES

DJ Fusion set up Temporarities in 2007 as a meeting point for like-minded D&B and jungle record collectors. The site is a hub of related content with rare vinyl for sale at reasonable prices and mixes for download. Check it out at: www.temporarities.com

SUPPORT FOR YOUR SOUND

Supportyoursound.com is a recently launched website set up in London by veterans of the dance music industry. In an age of decreasing vinyl sales and with many artists struggling to get enough revenue from digital downloads this new company has a multitude of ways to support your sound. With a unique approach to each label and each project, they can produce merchandising including T-shirts, sweats, hoodies, stickers, record bags and beyond. Embracing the digital revolution needn't mean the only thing a label can sell are downloads. Get in touch via the site or by calling 0208 123 0062.

GRAM AGENCY

GRAM Agency is a UK based D&B artist agency with a selection of live and DJ acts. The agency has been operating for 2 years now and has grown from a small outfit representing a few local DJs into an organisation, which represents artists' right around the world. The full roster includes, The Upbeats, Cause4Concern, Misanthrop, Nocturnal, Prolix, Raiden, Unknown Error, Chris Su, N:Phect, EBK, Craggz & Parallel Forces, The Jungle Drummer & DJ Fu, Xample, Heist, Shimon, Sparfunk, Redeyes, Brooklyn, MC Messy, MC Mantmast & Ruthless. www.myspace.com/grassartistmanagement

THE HOOK UP

Pyroradio.com have recently joined forces with The Hook Up to host The Hook Up Music Player, with content including exclusive tracks, interviews and specials from the leading urban and black music figures. MySpace.com/thehookup is the place for all that's hot in UK urban culture and it features the finest in music, film, fashion, technology and more.

INFLUENCE

Swerve resident Aaron Jay is launching a new label in spring next year. Influence Records will be representing the deeper side of D&B. Artists already signed are Lynx, Eveson, RawQ and new boy, Brother. The label is getting support from heavyweights such as Fabio, Bukem, Marcus Intalex, Survival and D-Bridge to name a few. New artists on the horizon are Mix Master Doc, Naibu & Soul Intent. Big tings!

SONOROUS SOUNDS

After the success of their first release from Atlantic Connection going in at number 6 on the BBC Radio 1 & 1Xtra D&B chart, 2008 will be a busy year for Sonorous Sounds. Already out on promo and getting the full release in February is release number 2 featuring 'Shame On You' and 'Envy' from man of the minute, Lynx. On the digital download front, 001 is out now and 002 will follow next year. Also on the horizon are productions from new producer, Brother.

NIKE SUPERSONIC

Running and music should go hand in hand - tunes certainly make jogging more interesting - and the two came together as Dizzee Rascal and a 1000 of London's fastest young runners took part in the Nike Supersonic Final in Battersea Park, London. The successful event was attended by ATM as well as various British Olympic athletes and music industry heads. Jermaine Mays and Helen Ewing were the fastest male and female runners at the event, which ended in an exclusive gig headlined by Dizzee Rascal – who put on a wicked performance - alongside The Enemy. The hope is that events like this will nurture talent for the future ahead of the 2012 Olympics in London and encourage people to keep fit and do some regular exercise.

DREAD recordings

DREAD DIARY

January sees the release of the hotly anticipated Dread 009 limited edition 12" of The Dark Soldier remixes on an orange clear vinyl. With one remix from Vapour and one from Bladerunner, this pair of smashers have already seen support from the likes of Lemon D, Kenny Ken, Randall, Grooverider and Nicky Blackmarket. A classic tune reworked for 2008.

March sees the release of 'Dub Dread III', the next compilation in the 'Dub Dread' series. The album showcases exclusive dubs and VIPs from Dread artists featuring tracks from Serum, Bladerunner, Vapour, Venom, The Pedge, Explicit, The Dark Soldier and Ray Keith. This compilation also offers an exclusive remix of hip-hop legend Chuck D's 'Weapons Of Mass Distraction'. Coming later in the year from production alias, The Dark Soldier is the long awaited album 'Defender', which includes the title tune and the tracks 'Can U Feel Me' and 'Lovin'.

movement

ATM MEETS MOVEMENT!

ATM Magazine will be linking with our friends at London's longest running weekly drum'n'bass club night, Movement for the first in a series of parties at their home, Bar Rumba. The history between ATM & Movement stretches back many years and it's a link that will be strengthened in 2008 with these exciting events. ATM Editor, Mark OD says: "ATM and Movement have played a vital role in the scene for over a decade each and we'd like to extend an invitation to everyone to come down, enjoy the night and show some love for what are two drum and bass institutions."

The first event sees special guest Marcus Visionary from Digital Soundboy flying in from Canada for a rare UK set with a hefty line-up completed by Nicky Blackmarket and Ray Keith along with ATM's R Type, Mark OD. MCs Fats, 5 Alive and Tonn Piper will host the show and in the bar there's hip hop, electro, dubstep and house all night long.

We are running a guaranteed £5 paying in list for the event email: editor@atm-mag.com. For guestlist enquiries email: editor@atm-mag.com or jordan.movement@gmail.com

SHY FX WINS AWARD!

Shy FX beat off tough competition from Bailey, Fabio, Grooverider and Roni Size to win 'Best Drum & Bass DJ/Act', sponsored by Want Respect? Use a Condom at this year's Urban Music Awards. Want Respect? Use a Condom Ambassador, Zezi Ifore – E4 Presenter – presented Shy FX with the award for 'Best Drum & Bass DJ/Act'. Shy FX lived up to his name and was truly shy by name as well as by nature, simply saying "thank you". To find out more about Want Respect? Use a Condom visit www.myspace.com/wantrespect

MN2S

Artist management company and event promoters MN2S flex their impressive artist roster on Feb 29th @ The End in London. Kenny Dope, Joey Negro, Danism, The Jinks and Audiowhores are all in attendance for this mighty dance. For more info on the gig or any of the artists check www.mn2s.com

DEF:INITION

For all you feeling a bit strapped for cash after the seasonal period Def:inition are hosting the Free Entry Payback event at Clockwork on Sat 19th Jan. Get down early or there's no getting in! Appearing on the night is Nicky Blackmarket, DJ Empress, Tyson, Ollie and R-Type. On 16th Feb Def:inition will feature the Movement Special at Clockwork. Alongside the residents will be Bryan G, Ruffstuff, Jordan V and Silver.

KANE ON FACT

House master Dom Kane is releasing 'Smoke Machine' and 'Barion Genesis' on Fakt Recordings. This digital release only is available from all key stores from 25th Feb. The two tracks in this package feature as part of 'Get Fakt 01', they're mixed by Black Russian and are available free for customers of Trackitdown.net and Beatport.com.

BACK 2 ONE NATION

One Nation are hosting their annual Back 2 Back special as their first event of 2008. The event will feature the industries biggest and best DJs going B2B all night. Highlights include Andy C B2B Hype, Subfocus B2B TC and Dillinja B2B Lemon D. The event is one Sat 9th Feb at the Brixton Academy.

NEW TERM AT MED SCHOOL

Hospital affiliate label, Med School blaze into 2008 with the 7th release on the imprint. Confirmed tracks on the 'New Blood' EP include 'Psalms 24' from Infiltrata and 'Worst Case Scenario' from Germany's Martsman. Set for release at the end of Feb. Med School artists Martsman and Fracture & Neptune are appearing at Fabric (London) as part of the Hospital Records takeover of one of the nation's favourite superclubs. Also in the Med School room are 4 Hero, Klute and Flight. The date is Fri 4th Jan. www.medschoolmusic.com

SIMPLY SANTORIN

The German labels 23rd release 'Between Two Worlds' has received airplay from Fabio and the 24th release, 'U Got It' and 'Bright Night' from Young Ax are out in Feb. As usual Santorin are top contenders for the award of Best German D&B Label for 2007. Visit the label site to vote for them and gain entry to their exclusive comp for voters. www.santorin.de

NEW WAVE NEW VENUE

Having moved successfully to Plan B (London) in Nov last year, New Wave kick off the new year on 25th Jan with residents B-One, Zero Tolerance, Messy MC and the winner of their on-going DJ comp. To enter, send a link to your mix to kim@newwavemusic.co.uk or visit www.newwavemusic.co.uk.

TRICK OF TECH:NOLOGY

Tech:Nology celebrate their 3rd birthday on Fri 18th Jan at The Rhythm Factory in London. After passing through many clubs with many different artists, this night features the highlights of 3 years in the biz. Loxy is performing a 2-hour set alongside partner in crime, MC 2Shy. Also in attendance, Dom & Roland, Break and Kryptic Minds. Check www.technologydnb.com.

PLASA 2008

Audiophiles and lighting enthusiasts take note. The world-renowned Plasa showcase date for 2008 has been announced. 7th–10th Sept at Earls Court in London is the date to find out about music technology of the future, don't forget!

word on the streets

METROPOLIS

METROPOLIS @ MOS

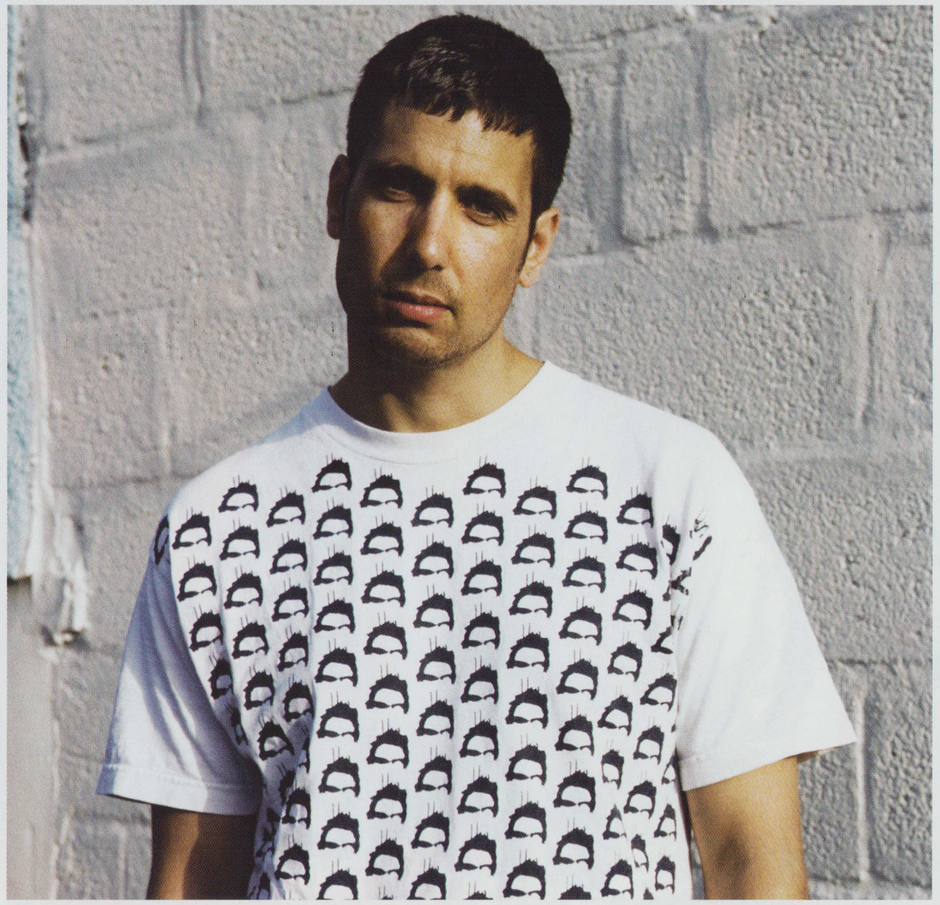
Clubbing giant, Metropolis host their first event in London on March 14th 2008 at Ministry of Sound with a line-up of epic proportions. The night will be in association with Valve Recordings and Essence of Chi and the Valve soundsystem will be in full effect. The line-up is all killer no filler. Confirmed so far: DJ Hype, Marcus Intalex, Dillinja & Lemon D, El Hornet, Noisia, Friction, Goldie, Bryan G, Calibre, Hatcha, Youngsta, N-Type and more. Meanwhile Metropolis return to their original home, Industry, Manchester on February 29th 2008 with Randall, Fresh, Commix and Hazard on the bill. The legendary club space was formerly known as Paradise Factory (now it's just called The Club) and has been taken over by the people behind The Warehouse Project. They open their doors for business at the end of January with some killer line-ups every weekend, for more info check: www.112-116princessstreet.co.uk

DRUM&BASSARENA
WWW.BREAKBEAT.CO.UK

DRUM AND BASS ARENA

Drum and Bass Arena are holding a DJ competition sponsored by KAM in January '08, where the winner receives £1000, a headline slot at a D&B Arena event and a shed load of KAM equipment! Enter via D&B Arena website: www.breakbeat.co.uk

Also the Arena events are taking over Heaven on a regular basis in 2008, with very special guest DJ Rap making her first UK appearance for several years down at their event on Feb 8th. Rap will be playing an old school jungle set packed full of Proper Talent classic no doubt. The rest of the line-up for this one reads like a who's who of drum and bass and dubstep, so to mix with all the leading industry movers and shakers get on down.



CLEAR SKYZ

Just as DJ Die has officially launched his new Clear Skyz imprint, ATM caught up with him for a quick Q&A to get the low down on the new label...

What's the deal?
"The idea behind Clear Skyz is to put out quality music, kinda clichéd I know but that's the main objective. I want to put out music that's going to be around for a long time, not just a shelf life of 2 months then forgotten about and I want Clear Skyz to have the freedom to go where it wants musically and even touch on outer genres like dubstep, hip hop and what ever else I feel fits in with what the label is about."

Who is involved?
So far the artists involved are myself, Ben Westbeech and Clipz collaboration. I've given the parts to the original track Clear Skyz to Commix to remix plus I've made a track with Break which I'm going to put on the flip.

Why launch now?
Now is the right time because I feel that I've been around long enough to have a vision of what I believe is good music and I what to express that with Clear Skyz. To have my own brand is exciting and it feels like I'm starting out again. I also had some music lying about that needed to come out so it had to be done.

What's happening in 2008?
With the first release out and the next 2 in place it feels great to be a part of this scene. I'm going to be back in the lab making beats, doing some DJ tours and label nights, also I want to work on a range of merchandise and concentrate on building and promoting Clear Skyz, oh and do some skating as-well.

RAW RECORDINGS

After a years rest, Raw Recordings are back with some very big tracks in store for 2008. Newly signed artists Sensa and Dub Foundation, Dawn Raid, Target, DJ Dose and DJ Lux will all be dropping bombs on this imprint in the near future. First up is 'Try to Believe' from Dawn Raid and 'Sentinel' from Kieran Jay on the flip, this will be out in January.

HAMMER RECORDS

Digital label Hammer are poised for the 7th release since their launch last year. Kicking off 2008 is DJ Swiss with the first of 3 EPs due for release this year, closely followed by Dawn Raid's 'Convoy' EP. After this will be 'The Board' from DJ-Lux.

INTRODUCING SOLSTICE

Solstice is a group of 3 producers. Jon & Matt Maynard are joined by Krafty_PK to complete the trio. Having signed a deal with Little Rascal Records, Solstice will be releasing an EP early this year with an LP following shortly after.

BREAKS ON SHOGUN AUDIO

The forthcoming 12" on Friction's Shogun Audio will feature kings of the breaks Aquasky and Quest remixing Noisia's 'Brainstitch' and Jonny L's 'Back to your Roots'. Friction has stated that he will release quality tracks from outside D&B on his label, possibly even some dubstep in the future.

YOU LUCKY DEVIL

Lucky Devil have released the promo of Survival's 'Forget Tomorrow' with Zyon Base's 'The Wire' on the flip. Following this in Feb will be Lucky Devil 5. This will include Dutch producer, Switch's collaboration with Henree on 'Piece of History' and 'Nightwatcher' from Stunna. Apparently Fusion has created a devilish mix of D&B and dubstep for release later in 2008.

BABLYON

Sappo's Babylon imprint is gaining momentum as the second release 'Limb by Limb' b/w 'Don Dadda' is out in the shops now. Over on Advisory, Sappo's other label, a debut release from Mutated Forms, 'G-Unit' b/w 'Number One'. For the future, Advisory will feature remixes of Sappo's biggest tunes from DJ Cabbie and Connecta then Sappo himself is back with the 'Circumference' Rmx from his EP, 'Never Say Die'.

BLOC PARTY

Bloc Party returns in 2008 for one of the biggest parties in the UK. On the 14th – 16th March, Pontin's Holiday Park in Great Yarmouth will be rocked to the core. Confirmed artists include the newly reformed Red Snapper, Amon Tobin, Bochum Welt, Skream, Oris Jay, N Type, Stakka & Skynet, A Guy Called Gerald and many, many more. Check the site: www.blocweekend.com for more info.

DUBSTEP FORUM AWARDS

Everyone knows that dubstepforum.com is the number one place for online dubstep discussion. The annual awards voted exclusively by members of the forum have an added bonus this year in the form of a massive party at Herbal on 17th Jan. The winners will be announced at the event and the line-up will be crammed full of the best in the industry. This is an event to come and celebrate the collective achievement of dubstep, as well as recognise individuals who've excelled in 2007.

SYNTAX AUDIO

Syntax Audio is a new label out of St Petersburg, Russia. The people behind the label also run Royal Promotions Agency, which looks after many leading DJs bookings like Concord Dawn and Dieselboy and the label's first release is from Hungary's SKC and Russia's Subwave who joins forces with Electrosoul System. With people of this calibre involved this is a label to keep an eye on: www.myspace.com/syntaxaudio

guest column

words: Tali pic: Hacker

UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH TALI

Drum and bass to me is my religion. And I know it is the same for many others. The DJ is, as we all know, often revered like a God up there behind the decks commanding the crowd with intense beats and bass, and the MC is like a Reverend in Church, calling for rewinds and telling us to raise our hands up high, spreading the gospel of the music.

Like all religions there is a sense of unity and community and for me being part of a scene as exciting and diverse as drum and bass has never felt more like I know where I belong. I have only been into drum and bass for ten years. I say only because for some ten years is nothing. There are some people that have contributed to our scene for much longer than that, and then there are some who may have only just discovered it.

Whatever your personal experience was of discovering drum and bass, most people I have met talk about a sense of feeling like they'd found somewhere they belonged, or that it touched their heart in a way no words could ever describe. For myself it was no different. I look back on my years before I heard drum and bass and feel as though I wandered aimlessly in a social abyss. I would go to various pubs and bars at University, following the swarm of drunken students and watching as they jumped around in groups to top ten hits, forming cliques with one another that I hesitated to be a part of. When I moved cities, things began to change. I struggle to remember exactly what the turning point was when I discovered raving, or how I came to be friends with the people I would share many pivotal moments with in my drum and bass memory- but what I do know is that it was like I had been living my life in black and white for many years, and suddenly someone had flicked a switch and flooded it with colour.

Every weekend I was going to warehouses, clubs and house parties where my ears were filled with the sounds of breakbeat, house and trance. I wasn't really a fan of trance or house music, so for me something was yet to click in place, but I did love the vibe that raving provided me with. I loved looking around at the all the creatively dressed people losing themselves in the sound and energy. Then, one particular night while attending one of these all genre raves, everything changed. The trance had finished, and the next DJ stepped up, dropping a remix of Krust's tune 'Maintain'. The soaring wind sound and haunting vocal filled the club; the lights dimmed down, and when the bass dropped it hit me right in my chest. I started dancing and didn't stop for three hours. I wasn't entirely sure what it was I was listening to, all I knew was that my body seemed to take control and move more fluidly, like I had connected with something more potent than I'd ever experienced before. When the last DJ finished we clapped and cheered and begged for one more, and I recall being exhausted, looking around me at the few of us that were left, huge smiles on our satisfied faces, feeling like I had really found myself, my religion, my church.

Like all Religions, drum and bass has its fractions and divisions and there are always those that think they know better, that their gospel of how things should be is word. When I lived in New Zealand there were always politics within the scene and those petty few that sought to divide us, but those of us true to our ambitions and dreams rose above it, supporting each other and fighting on, our love for the music too great to be suffocated. Here in the UK it is no different, there are some people who have nothing more to contribute than jealousy, gossip and spite. Things escalate and get out of hand because someone said something who told someone else. Then there's those few who've used a radio show, a tune, or a spat on the mic to diss another, and on and on the negativity goes, it saddens me that with the growth of our scene, the brilliance of technology allowing us to reach across the world, and the forums that have been set up in order for opinions and news to be expressed, that some still can not contribute positively.

I have seen relationships that were forged through years of mutual respect, producing and touring together, fall apart because of things like this, and it's down right wack. Our scene has not maintained for this long because of this. It has maintained because we have worked hard to create unification, despite the wider medias attempts to pigeon hole us, through ignoring those that want to jump on whatever bandwagon is going, and by rising above the haters who want stop the evolution of our music. Obviously in the real world I am frustrated by actual religions fighting over this or that division in day to day life, failing to remember that above all we all believe in the same thing - the want and need for happiness, tolerance, compassion, and the search for the greater good. Surely no ones need for this is more 'right' than another's?

And in our scene, our religion, it should be no different. We all believe in jungle/drum and bass, OUR music, the thing that touched our hearts from the beginning and filled us with a sense of belonging, and an ambition to push things forward musically. Although there will always be genres of drum and bass we favour more than others, and in-house fighting that often divides us, and pathetic negativity spread across whatever forums - this should never be our focus.

Having all these different aspects of drum and bass means our music reaches a much wider audience, having differences of opinion is how we come up with a fresh and unique sound, and having haters and negativity should only drive us to work harder and maintain positivity about the progression of something that is truly unique and powerful.

As cheesy as it sounds, this should make us grateful that OUR religion really IS about dropping beats and not bombs. And those with positions of recognition within drum and bass should use the opportunity to say something worthwhile, to touch people's hearts and inspire them, to move people to think on a different, deeper level, and of course to want to dance!

Music for me personally and especially jungle/drum and bass has provided my life with more happiness, gratification and sense of belonging that any religion or belief in 'God' ever has or will.

And for this I am truly grateful. AMEN!

www.myspace.com/mc_tali
www.myspace.com/roguenouveau

alix perez & mc system

ATM Issue 75 Cover CD Feature

words: Mark OD pic: Zen Inoya

If 2007 was an excellent year for Alix Perez then 2008 could be the year this rising star goes into another stratosphere. Tracks like 'Vanguard', 'The Resolution', 'Crown City' and 'Solitary Native' (produced with Sabre) have been well received by people from all corners of the industry. Because of his quality it's sometimes easy to forget that he's only been releasing records for the last couple of years. In that time he's been a breath of fresh air, and has been at the forefront of a new wave of producers who have been making deep, credible shades of Drum and Bass music.

ATM hooked up with the cover CD mixologist, Mr Perez and the host, MC System in Finsbury Park, London, a neighbourhood that has more than its fair share of drum and bass residents': SP MC, Stamina, Verse, Sabre and Alix all live round here, but as Alix says its not like they camp round each other's yards. "We don't actually see each other all the time because everyone's busy doing their own thing."

Mark aka System only lives 15-20 minutes down the road and has been working in the music industry longer than most. "I was producing before I was MCing. I started making drum and bass in its earliest form in 1990. I felt my production had reached an acceptable standard ten years ago, but I am an absolute perfectionist and sometimes it holds me back. The last few years I've been getting quite a lot of support from DJs and producers." With releases on progressive labels such as Future Thinking, Dispatch, Vampire, Diablo and a hip-hop LP project on the horizon, it's clear System is a versatile and solid all-rounder.

Funnily enough, the link between these two began at an ATM party on Brick Lane a couple of years ago. "I was MCing and Alix introduced himself. At the time we were living round the corner from each other," Mark explains. "We work together fairly regularly; we were out in Russia together recently."

"We've both got a residency in Bristol at Intrigue (Insiders night), Alix continues. "Generally we've both got the same direction in drum and bass and musically we both like old school hip-hop. When you find the same tastes with people, you generally get on."

This mutual love of the same kind of music extends into their passion for skateboarding. Sometime earlier when the photos were getting sorted in the local park, they were quick to tell me about their love of skating, particularly in their early days and their skating etiquette was clear in the apologies they gave to the local skaters as we took up valuable daylight time to get the shots boxed off.

The labels Alix has released music on such as Lucky Devil, Horizons, Bassbin, Innerground, Shogun and Brigand have one thing in common: consistency. These are labels that don't chase trends or drop a release just because it's the sound of now and for that they should be applauded. 2008 will see Alix still working with some of the labels above but it will also see him focusing his attention on two of the scene's key players: Soul:R and Shogun. Alix teaming up with Soul:R was on the cards for a while, it makes perfect sense for him to work alongside three obvious inspirations in Marcus Intalex, ST Files and arguably his biggest of all, Calibre. Early 2008 will see a Soul:R EP from Alix Perez and the equally impressive, Lynx. The EP features the hip-hop inspired 'Crooklyn' amongst others. His link to Shogun remains intact as well with a few things in the pipeline in 2008 including 'Stray' which is on the cover CD mix. Forum gossip has been rife of an LP project from Alix but he's not going to be rushed into it. "There's been a lot of speculation; I'm waiting to feel ready. I've only been releasing records for 2/3 years. Look at Commix they've only just done an album and they've been around for quite a while. So I don't want to pressure myself into it. I will do an album but I don't want it to be standard rollers."

So what's the deal with the exclusive ATM mix? "It's a collection of music that I personally feel is the right representation of my sound," says Alix. "There's a couple of my own things on there and new talent, bringing fresh sound to the table; the sort of stuff that touches me musically." Name checking the likes of Zero T, Beta2, Calibre, Survival and System as the producers on the rollcall for the mix, Alix is thankfully not keen on the sweeping brush stroke of liquid as a way to describe the sound. "I don't like the term liquid, but its deep music, that's still heavy, it works in the club and its main element is drum and bass but mixed with feeling and soul."

"Studio mixes are personally the hardest thing I have to do," outlines System on the subject of laying down vocals in a studio scenario. "It's such a sterile environment. Alix's mix is just music that totally inspires me. It was easy for me to lock into a zone and get everything down and there's new lyrics of mine on there as well. It's the side of the scene that I feel closest to, although as artists both of us are versatile in terms of production, DJing and MCing. I just put the mix on and straight away everything just slotted in and worked."

If a DJ/MC combination is all about complementing each other then these guys have got the combo locked tight. One thing you can guarantee is that System, who comes from the SP MC, Rhymetime, Conrad, DRS, school of D&B MCing, won't rattle off lyrics until the music suffocates. "As an MC my absolute priority is the music. With this kind of style, the MC is there to complete the loop. When I recite lyrics, there's an energy to it, but I don't believe in speaking nonsense just for the sake of filling gaps. It's just unnecessary. What I've done on there complements the grooves; it fits inside phrases, tonality and energy. The mix is quite a journey, which suits my lyrical style."

Kick back, make yourself a brew, roll yourself a fat one, whatever you like to do to get in the mood and stick this mix on nice and loud. If this is the sound of 2008 right before your very ears, then Drum and Bass has got a lot to shout about.

ATM ISSUE 73 COVER CD TRACKLISTING
MIXED BY ALIX PEREZ FEAT. MC SYSTEM

01. **CALIBRE**
'LECTRO'
(SIGNATURE)

02. **SPECTRASOUL**
'IN PROFILE '
(DUB)

03. **D BRIDGE**
'THE RAPTURE'
(EXIT)

04. **ALIX PEREZ**
'STRAY'
(SHOGUN)

05. **PHYSICS**
'DREAMWORLD (D BRIDGE REMIX)'
(BLINDSIDE)

06. **CHRIS INPERSPECTIVE**
'HEATHER'S HOT WAFFLES'
(EXIT)

07. **BAL**
'REMEMBERANCE'
(VAMPIRE)

08. **SURVIVAL**
'DAY LIGHT'
(AUDIO TACTICS)

09. **ZERO T + MOSUS FEAT. STEO**
'CALL WAITING'
(LIQUID V)

10. **SYSTEM**
'NEAR MISS'
(DUB)

11. **ZERO T & BETA 2**
'HANG TWICE'
(MAC II)

12. **ALIX PEREZ + SURVIVAL**
'UNKNOWN'
(DUB)

13. **SABRE**
'RIVERSIDE (ZERO T REMIX)'
(LUCKY DEVIL)

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JFB (UK DMC)
JJ FROST
JORDAN V
MUTT
NICKY BLACKMARKET
RAY KEITH
RANDALL
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words: Ben Willmott

ATM Hall Of Fame 004: LTJ BUKEM

If you're looking for the moment in musical history when Drum and Bass was born, then you could do a lot worse than the release of LTJ Bukem's seminal track 'Music' in 1993. Before that moment, the music was called jungle, audibly a direct descendant of rave and inevitably frantic in mood. In total contrast, 'Music' was a roller on an epic scale, its main theme a subtly uplifting synth line that surfed wave after wave of undulating beats. Most jungle records were heavily inspired by ragga and reggae, plus the obligatory Amen break of course. 'Music' not only operated on a completely different set of altogether warmer and funkier beats, it brought jazz, funk and ambient music into the equation too and seemed to instantly open the music up and suggest a world of new possibilities. Without it, it's hard to imagine groundbreaking records like Alex Reece's 'Pulp Fiction' or Peshay's 'Miles From Home' and a whole host of others, being made.

Of course, Bukem isn't just famous for 'Music', even if that would have been enough to have his name forever engrained in D&B history. His string of early 90s singles like 'Demon's Theme' and 'Horizon' were all pivotal releases, every bit as vital as the early output of Moving Shadow, Full Cycle or Metalheadz in shaping the fledgling scene. You only need to look to the currently thriving scene of deeper, more musical-orientated artists around today, like Calibre, Commix, Marcus Intalex, Marky, Zero Tolerance and Artificial Intelligence, to see that his influence has continued to this day.

Despite admitting "a lot of drum and bass artists have told me that they were influenced by that track ('Music')", his 'Return To Atlantis' remix is the old tune that Bukem tends to slip into his sets (as does Andy C and many others). "I still play it now," he says, "it's from that 91/92 period but somehow it seems so kind of now."

He also laughs about 'Demon's Theme' being made during a one night session at a mate's house. "It was made with about seven people in the room," he recalls, "I was desperate to get on the equipment, so I waited until everyone fell asleep and then I got to work. By the time they woke up it was finished. But that's the thing about those old tunes, there's nothing overdone about them."

Not that the success of his Good Looking label was restricted to Bukem's own releases. Peshay's 'Piano Tune' and 'Vocal Tune' both emerged on the label, as did Aquarius aka Photek's 'Drift To The Centre' and 'Bringing Me Down' plus PFM's 'The Western' and 'One and Only', along with vinyl from Chameleon and Tayla. The massive selling 'Logical Progression' compilation through major London Records had a seismic impact in bringing new listener's into the drum and bass scene, as did a hilarious behind the scenes BBC 'Modern Lives' documentary, which followed Bukem and MC Conrad as they toured the States, while LTJ's business partner Tony harangued bootleg salesmen and hotel receptionists.

When he later took up residency at legendary weekly night Speed at the Mars Bar in Central London, along with Fabio, this only served to confirm his status as one of the industry's biggest names. Since then, however, Good Looking has followed very much its own path. Keen not to be hemmed in by the restrictions of D&B, Bukem's long awaited debut artist album was full of experiments in breakbeat and jazzy downbeat. He continued to be a key drum and bass DJ, but his D&B tunes were conspicuous by their absence.

Until now, that is. 'Switch' is Bukem's first D&B tune for a good few years, and marks a turning point in Good Looking history. In the past, LTJ has blamed his devotion to DJing for the lack of new productions. Now, he reveals, he's been easing off the bookings and spending more time in the studio, with eight or so D&B tracks already completed for a new solo album due for release "sometime in the next 12-24 months."

He's hoping to "get a few famous people involved", especially in the vocal department. Asked how he'd describe one of his new tracks 'Switch', he says "well, it's just a beats track," as though he'd made it the day after 'Logical Progression' and well, what do you expect other than the usual Bukem trademarks?! Asked if it was strange making D&B again, he replies not at all, again as if his absence from making beats was a matter of minutes rather than a several year hiatus.

What he's more vocal about is the recent changes he's made to the label and his life. As well as less touring – "I love it but I hate the travelling" - and more recording, the label's roster has been stripped to concentrate on Bukem and his longtime comrade MC Conrad. "Tony and I have both had enough," he says by way of explanation, "it's been a long time since either of us had a holiday and although the label is important to us, there are more important things in life, like love and relationships."

The upside is that as well as his album, Bukem will also be producing tracks for Conrad's debut solo LP, along with a host of other scenesters including Calibre, Artificial Intelligence, Utah Jazz and Zero Tolerance, all keen to lend their knob twiddling skills. Given that Bukem and Good Looking have, at times, been one of the only major standard bearers for more musical D&B, he must be delighted at how this end of D&B has survived and grown. "Calibre is amazing," he says, "he's like a magician. But there's loads of great stuff about at the moment, you know, Sabre, Nu Tone, Commix and loads of others. I'm probably cutting more dubs now than I was during the days of Speed!"

It's very true that, in terms of deep D&B, we have never had it so good. Without the massive strides LTJ Bukem made in the early 90s, it's hard to imagine the 'it' in question would even exist.

www.goodlooking.org/

Jill Scott
One Of A Kind

words: Mark O'Donnell

The time: 1245pm. The place: 7th floor, Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London. The calm, hushed atmosphere in the luxury 5-star hotel suite is a far cry from the heaving throngs found on one of the world's busiest shopping strips half a mile away on Oxford Street. ATM has been invited to interview one of the world's leading female vocalists, Jill Scott, and with only a handful of UK publications allocated time in her condensed press schedule it was an offer we simply couldn't refuse.

Jill Scott's career reads like a fairytale story. Following a humble upbringing in North Philadelphia ("where I came from, people felt poorly towards it"), she became involved in poetry jams and local theatre groups. In 2000 she co-wrote the all-time classic, 'You Got Me', which became an award-winning number for The Roots and Erykah Badu, and by 2001 she'd hit the big-time with her award-winning Platinum debut LP, 'Who Is Jill Scott'. Along the way she has stayed loyal to her label (Hidden Beach), worked with the likes of The Roots, Jazzy Jeff and 4 Hero, she has various film and TV roles to her credit and she's received over nine Grammy Award nominations. She recently released her third LP, 'The Real Thing: Words & Sounds Vol 3', Jill Scott (or Jilly from Philly, as she's affectionately know) is without doubt one of the most exceptional female artists of our time.

At the start of her UK and European tour, Jill and her management have been in London for less than 48 hours and in that space of time she's only managed to snatch two hours of precious sleep. Despite the shut-eye deprivation, when ATM meet her she's genuinely convivial, warm and friendly. She even does a little cute curtsy as she says hello. Behind her designer Chanel glasses she has a twinkle in her eye and, as she familiarises herself with a previous copy of ATM, she stops to admire the Working Class Heroes page before saying on the subject of graffiti, "I love it."

The UK has always shown a lot of love to Jill Scott's music and when she performs live it's always an incredible feel-good experience. "The (UK) audiences are amazing," she sets out. "Consistently from the Jazz Café (her first gig) until now, they're Ra-Ra loud, fun, quiet, and very respectful. When it's time to shout out, they do…" Make noise? "Yeah," she responds, "make noise, they do. I love that, people in the UK love music, that's clear."

When Scott toured the UK promoting her debut LP some years ago, ATM attended the Manchester show. Even at this early stage of her career, the crowd full of local girls from neighbourhoods like Moss Side, Longsight and Cheetham Hill knew her lyrics and sang them at her beautifully as if they were auditioning to be her backing singers'. You can hear this on her 'Experience Live' release from 2001 (albeit a recording of another crowd in another city, Washington DC to be exact). How does it feel to have audiences sing your lyrics the world over? "Amazing," she answers. "People across so much sand and so much water, have heard what you have brought to the world. It's humbling, it's like, 'Are you serious? Oh Wow!'" she laughs as a smile stretches across her face. "You want to hug everybody like, Wow! It's flattering; it's good to feel appreciated."

Despite boasting a huge global fan base, support from the streets has not always translated into mainstream chart-topping success for Scott, particularly in the UK. The fact that her collaboration with Lupe Fiasco on 'Daydreamin', which peaked at number 25 in the singles chart, is the highest single position she's attained in the UK shows the record buying tastes of the mainstream audiences are yet to mature beyond the familiar and utterly inferior tones of say Lilly Allen and Joss Stone or the more fleshy sales pitch of say Christina Aguilera or Beyonce. A more familiar contemporary for Jill Scott, whose name merits inclusion on talent not just as a lazy comparison, is Erykah Badu, someone she shared the stage with at Block Party, someone she shares the same ability to produce amazing albums and someone who shares her desire for charitable causes – they've both set up community based foundations in the US.

With the exception of Erykah - who despite being very different in vocal style and delivery is cut from the same quality - Jill Scott's voice and songwriting puts her head and shoulders above the soulful female vocalists currently operating today. At one moment her voice can be soft, sensual and vulnerable and the next, window shattering and tempestuous, like a raging storm. Was there a time when she realised the power of her voice? "I'm still figuring it out," she reflects. "There are things that I can do with my voice that I couldn't do two years ago. I listen to a lot of vocalists from around the world, Ali Khan (legendary Qawwali singer) passed away, but he could sing two notes at the same time and make them move individually. That's unbelievable. I practice those things and try to incorporate it into the next thing."

Twinned with her vocal prowess is Scott's ability with the pen. Her lyrics have always pointed to her love of freestyle poetry and her early days scratching a living in the jam sessions around her native Philadelphia. She can also write incredible love songs, not just mushy ones, but songs that resonate with ecstasy and pain, longing and contentment. Writing has "always" been a cathartic process for her. "You go through things and you don't necessarily understand it. Sometimes you write just because you want to remember it; details; a moment in time, and it's always helpful for me to get things off my chest; something that's been around in my mind or my heart for too long. I just want to get it out."

Is there anything specific that sparks a rush of creative flow? There's a short pause, before she responds in her soft accent. "When I see something that's really beautiful. I was in Africa during the summer and I had to take a helicopter every day to go to work (Editor: as you do), and being above the delta, all of that lush green, and there's elephants, you know like elephants, just hanging out or lions just walking down the road," she says over-emphasising the animals names as a way of illustrating her child-like awe. "The level of beauty that has been created, it's awe inspiring. It makes me write a lot…oh gosh, the stars!" she continues. "They're so beautiful. I need a vacation, not just for a holiday, in order to be re-inspired all the time."

During browsing the online oracles known as YouTube, MySpace and Wikipedia for Jill links, I came across her talking about her mother taking her to different places and experiencing different things when she was young and talk of the inspiration she gains from new and beautiful things brings up the subject of her mother. "She kept that up; kept me continuously inspired." So those happy memories were a good foundation in life? "Yeah, I don't know if it was always necessarily happy, but it was interesting, it was stimulating and I can live with interesting, I can live with stimulating."

Time moves fast and I can see one of the ladies accompanying Jill fidgeting and looking at her watch, but to her credit Jill stays firmly focussed on the interview. We move onto the release of her third LP, 'The Real Thing: Words & Sounds Vol 3.' This album comes in the wake of her second LP, 'Beautifully Human', which although containing some standout moments, ultimately didn't register on the same earth shattering frequencies as her stellar debut. Ever since I received the latest LP, it has been on constant rotation on my CD player and my iPod. If you take all three albums as a body of work there are not many artists that can point to such quality and consistency.

The third LP documents the most recent phase of the life and times of Jill Scott. The fact that she has been through a divorce - from the love of her life - and run the whole gamut of emotions that accompany such a thing, mean that it's intimate and at times brutally honest. "It's very honest," she confirms. "It's not everything that's happened in my life, but it's what's been on my mind. When you're single, my grandmother said it best, 'You need to put that on the shelf for a while', so you can figure out where you've been. Celibacy has opened my mind to a lot of sexual things. I'm a human being so I think about it. I can't help it. Those topics came out in the course of the project, but I wasn't mad about it, I wasn't upset at all."

One of the things she thought about was having some casual, but ultimately "empty" relationships. "I thought about it," she says laughing, "I just thought people think of me as a diva - which is nice to me because I don't look at it in a negative way – so I can just get a little 23-year-old who can carry my luggage and do what I say. 'Let mamma speak!'" she says joking and affecting a domineering tone. "I thought about that and thought that's so funny. I just ended up writing more than anything else. That's what's come out, 'Epithany'."

Some weeks later on a cold and crisp winter's evening at the Shepherds Bush Empire, Jill Scott sets the scene for the live rendition of one of the most adult tracks from the LP, 'Epithany'. "I'm a storyteller, that's what I do," she tells the hushed crowd. The song deals with sex not in a gratuitous or expletive sense, but in that it tells the story of a steamy encounter. Jill later mocks those who question the use of language like "creamy lather" or "in between my breasts" in her latest work to the amusement of the audience. On stage her presence is undeniable, framed by electric blue stage lighting and accompanied by an 11 piece band in the grand setting of the Shepherds Bush Empire, she travels through her new material like the fierce and feisty 'Hate On Me', the 21st Century Philly soul of 'Crown Royal On Ice', and the bittersweet, achingly candid theatre of 'My Love'. Classic Scott tracks like 'Long Walk' and the soul opera 'He Loves Me' push the energy and crowd noise to the peak of the night, where the crowd are encouraged to take part in a mass sing-along. Something Jill said back in the hotel suite springs to mind: "It's reciprocal…you give, I give, that's what makes it an experience."

When you think of soul music, hip-hop music, indeed any kind of music of black origin in today's marketplace, it seems like the biggest sellers and the most hyped are a pale imitation of the real thing. It's as if the genres have been hi-jacked by imposters who are promoting soul-lite or purporting that ringtone rap is the future. Scratch the surface and in reality there are many artists that are making authentic music that is light-years ahead of the mainstream focus. Amongst them is one of the leading ladies, Ms Jill Scott – the genuine article.

'The Real Thing: Words & Sounds Vol 3' is out now.
www.jillscott.com or www.myspace.com/whoisjillscott

NEWS UPDATE...

KRUST

Everyone knows that the New Year is a time for resolutions, and what better resolution could Full Cycle stalwart DJ Krust have than to inflict utter chaos upon you unsuspecting D&B fans with a massive double CD packed with classics and unreleased gems from the Full Cycle crew's collective back catalogue?

That's right, Krust has lovingly gathered a selection of his beloved beats spanning over a decade of Full Cycle love and, rather like a proud father, has blended them fluently for your aural delight. Featuring a big selection of Full Cycle favourites including Roni Size's hoover-wobble monster '26 Bass', Die & Clipz' modern classic 'Black Doves', Krust's own comic book super villain 'Kloaking Device' and Die & Photek's huge vocal smasher 'Thunder' (ft. Hollie G) alongside a few Full Cycle crew productions from other labels, such as Roni Size vs. Rahzel's beatbox mastery on the incredibly sought after 'Out Of Breath' (originally on V Recordings) and Roni's Jump Up ogre 'Friends' which appeared on Technique's 'Street Technique' album.

Anyone who's been a fan of Full Cycle throughout the years will be eager to get their hands on this double CD affair, and with promises of a series to emerge with more classic, unreleased and exclusive material from the FC vaults it seems 'The Chronicles Of The Cycle' are just beginning.

STRAIGHT OUT THE LAB

For those of you not in the know (and you should be ashamed!) the Co-Lab crew have been steadily building themselves a Drum & Bass empire for some years now. Their combined musical outputs include Calypso Muzak, Pure Vibez and of course, Co-Lab itself. So what better way to kick off 2008 than with a massive LP project that spans all three labels with a series of massive vinyl releases and encompasses one immense CD compiled and mixed by Heist and label owner Benny Co-Lab, liberally sprinkled with vocal flourishes from MC Funsta?

That's right, there is no better way! The incredible diversity of the 'Straight Out Of The Lab' LP hits hard too, with exclusive productions and remixes from TC, Lomax, Jaydan, Taxman, Majistrate, Benny Page, Heist, Visionary, Malfoy, DJ Pleasure, Connecta and many more all expertly blended on CD or divided into loving, bite-sized chunks for all you DJs and vinyl fans out there.

First up will be the stunning sampler 12" which is already gathering massive support on BBC 1xtra as well as lighting fires under dancefloors across the globe. Heist leads the way with the almighty 'Ambush' while Lomax picks up the flack on the AA side with 'Metal Flange'. Following on from that will be a succession of hot 12"s surrounding the release of the CD itself. Hotter than a cup of lava tea on a summer's day!

SPEARHEAD MOODSWING

Another massive album for the first quarter of 2008 is the extremely fresh and ever so funky 'Moodswings' compilation from Spearhead Recordings. Spearhead has built up a devastating reputation over the last few years for delivering quality, melodic Drum & Bass, showcasing both new talent and seasoned veterans alike; an ethos that this new LP project sticks to nicely.

Injecting some bigger names into the mix is always beneficial to a large scale project such as this, and Spearhead have drafted in some of the scene's biggest musical heavyweights including Marky & Bungle, Nu:Tone, Utah Jazz, A Sides, Muffler, LAOS, long time friend Kubiks and a selection of the freshest talent on the block to ensure that 'Moodswings' hits you harder than Mayweather's 'check hook'.

Lenzman's 'Caught Up' gets a nifty Nu:Tone remix for the first half of the 'Moodswings' sampler 12", while A Sides makes a guest appearance with the incredible 'Lustrous', making this a slab of wax not to be missed. Following the sampler will be a triple vinyl pack, sexy enough to make love to, featuring Marky & Bungle's winter warming 'Let Me Tell You', Utah Jazz' smooth and silky 'Split Level' and a slick, musically minimal BCee & Lomax remix of Electrosoul System's 'Moving In Transit' alongside three other stunning compositions. Throw a CD album into the mix with a selection of exclusive tracks to run alongside their vinyl counterparts and you know that 'Moodswings' will pull you out of even the most depressive disposition and have you raving in your living room!

LADIES NIGHT

Dieselboy's A&R skills are always on point and that shines through once again on the latest dancefloor destroying 12" to drop on his Human Imprint label which joins the Nu Urban family to drop their hottest 12" to date. In true Drum & Bass tradition 'Ladies Night' is one of those tracks that everyone and their mum has wanted a copy of for the last year, but it's only now that it finally sees a vinyl release! If you've heard Andy C DJ in the last year, you'll know exactly what this monster tune and its VIP offspring sound like and considering that Mr. Clarke and the rest of the D&B aristocracy still have 'Ladies Night' on constant rotation we can only foresee this track doing just as well as if it was boxfresh.

That now infamous "Girl, you know a bitch is a HO HOOO HOOOO" sample works its magic amidst a wash of sirens, grinding basslines and either clattering 'cutlery down a set of metal stairs' or straight up, two step beats (depending on which version you're playing) and Demo & Cease distil them both into a pure shot of vigorous D&B moonshine that will knock your teeth out if you look at it in the wrong way. Absolutely massive, Dieselboy and Human Imprint, we salute you!

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NEW RELEASES...

TELEMETRIK
MY LIGHT YEAR: ACT ONE (LP SAMPLER)
BLACK SUN EMPIRE

BLAME
OUT THERE / RUSH
CHARGE

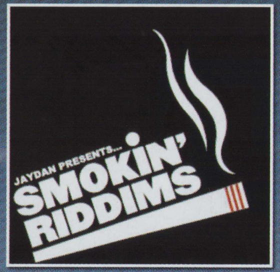
DIE & CLIPZ
INDIAN SUMMER / BACK INSIDE
CLEAR SKYZ

DEMO & CEASE
LADIES NIGHT
HUMAN IMPRINT

ORIGINAL SIN
DONT BE SILLY / CHEATER CHEATER
GANJA

TC
DRINK (XAMPLE REMIX) / GAME OVER VIP
D STYLE

KENNY KEN
EVERYMAN (BENNY PAGE REMIX)
MIX & BLEN'

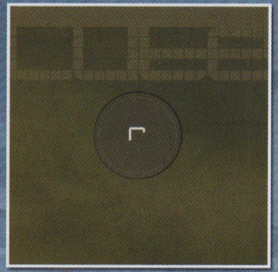


JAYDAN
AFTER DARK / RINSE THE SELECTION
SMOKIN' RIDDIMS

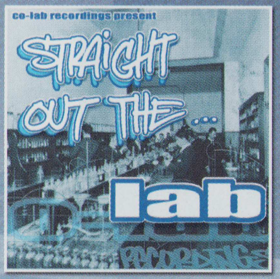
DJ PLEASURE
VENGAR / FIVE POINTS
LOW DOWN DEEP

MODIFIED MOTION & FACTION - THE DARKNESS
BENNY PAGE & ZERO G - SOUND KILLA
XS

FRICTION & NU BALANCE
ROBOCOP (TAXMAN REMIX)
PLAYAZ



MINDSCAPE & SAFIRE - HEATSTROKE
MINDSCAPE - MALFUNCTION
RESOLUTE



VARIOUS ARTISTS
STRAIGHT OUT THE LAB LP
CO LAB / CALYPSO / PURE VIBEZ

MICKY FINN & ERB N DUB
ATTENTION / STOP
FINN PEOPLE

BREAK
LIVEEVIL
LEVITATED

CLIPZ
OFFLINE EP
AUDIO ZOO

XRS & GILBERTO GIL
DIA DEL SOL (DRUMAGICK REMIX)
BEATMASTERS

DEEP
DEEPER / PREPARE
FREQUENCY

LENZMAN
CAUGHT UP (NU TONE REMIX)
SPEARHEAD

SHIMON
GUNSLINGER / THE DAMNED
CYMBALISM

DIELOOTED

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As you know, our aim here at **ATM**, is to illustrate the range and quality of artists we have here in the UK. So this month we dialled 118-**DIELOOTED** and got through to a line manned by one of the U.K's most notorious crews. Trust me these guys don't fuck around when it comes to spreading butter ability. Hailing from East London/Essex, **DIELOOTED** are one of the most up and coming crews on the UK scene today, consisting of **ARE**, **IZER** and **YESB**. **DIELOOTED** have been regularly burning Chelmsford, Plaistow and their own spots over the past few years pushing productions and painting halls of fame in heavy rotation. So sit back relax and enjoy some fresh ass productions...

To learn more about **DIELOOTED** peep:
www.dielooted.co.uk
myspace.com/hushyaskums

Anyone who wants to contribute to **WCH**, send your photo's to **framer@framerase.co.uk**

Clockwise from left: Undisclosed, East London, East London, Essex

Are Savager *Brooklyn New York* 2007

Yesb Are Izer *Essex* 2007

Yesb Izer *Essex* 2007

Izer Are Yesb *Essex* 2007

Izer Are Yesb *Essex* 2007

Yesb Izer Are *Essex* 2007

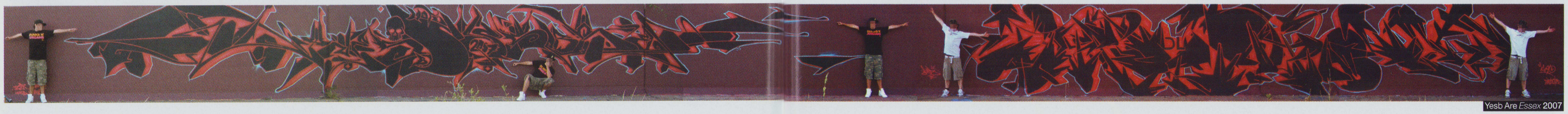
Yesb Izer Are *Essex* 2007

Yesb Izer Are *Essex* 2007

Yesb Izer Are *Essex* 2007

Yesb Are Izer *Essex* 2007

Yesb Are Izer *East London* 2007



Yesb Are *Essex* 2007

the upbeats

Cave Living Bikers

words: Hayze

Self proclaimed cave-living bikers from Mars, Jeremy Glenn and Dylan Jones, have spent the best part of ten years building the force that's known as The Upbeats. They've released on prolific labels, such as BC Presents, Virus, Violence, Renegade Hardware, Soul:R, and they have just completed their second artist album on Bad Taste Recordings.

Since meeting as young 'groms' in '97, The Upbeats introduction to D&B started with 'Jack The Ripper' & 'Circles' by Grooverider & Adam F. After being hooked instantly on an early version of Fruity Loops, the next four years were spent learning and enjoying making music. It wasn't until 2002/2003 when they began to think about advancing their technique and pushing towards some releases. The big break came through a chance airing of an Upbeats track at an after party in Puerto Rico where Vegas (BC) was in attendance.

"Vegas was lounging in the Jacuzzi, having his shoulders rubbed by some fine young nubiles. He asked who the tune was by, found out it was us, and it just so happened that he was heading to New Zealand the weekend after, so he got in contact and it all went from there."

It wasn't long before they were appearing on the highly respected BC Presents imprint with 'Slit' b/w 'Fill Me In'. Citing both Maldini & Vegas as a massive help to their advancement in the scene, The Upbeats are quick to show their appreciation.

Has it helped working with Maldini & Vegas? "Massively. That was pretty much our big break when we had our first 12" released on BC Presents, and they have always been really supportive of our ideas since. They also put up with us staying on their couch and making a mess of the house for weeks at a time when we are touring and staying in London!"

They consider their first big release to be the 2004 outing on BC Presents, 'Slit' / 'Fill Me'. Over the next three years they released tracks on numerous labels: BC Presents, the huge 12" on Virus ('Lost Once' / 'Lick-A-Demon'), Wildstyle, Habit, Hostile, Hardware, CIA, Violence, P51, while featuring on various artists LPs/ compilations and have now released their new LP 'Nobody's Out There', which is out in the shops right now. They are most enthusiastic about it: 'It's been three years and I think this is the thing that best represents what we're truly all about so far."

If you're wondering how they've managed to keep things fresh all these years without resorting to violence, it seems the answer is simple: "We take the piss! That's the main goal of any given day in the studio, to have a laugh. We don't take ourselves too seriously, so we've managed to keep this journey pretty damn fun. And thankfully after these last ten years, we still love what we do!"

With gigs in their home country and across the world, The Upbeats DJ profile continues to rise as time goes by. After just finishing a mammoth & hugely successful ten date tour of New Zealand, some detox is definitely required in December before 2008 tours of the U.S. and Europe are booked into the calendar. The tour includes Hospitality @ Heaven, Garagem (Porto) & Timebase in Kiev. Unlike many touring DJs, The Upbeats seem happy with how their trips have gone so far. "Aside from being close to death from alcohol poisoning in various planes and airports, being told by promoters that we were staying in a tent as the accommodation, missing flights to countries and the nightmares that ensue from that and almost dying of starvation on our first tour of Europe, we have had a pretty good run so far."

In a typical Upbeats', set you're likely to hear a considerable amount of Noisia, Dom, Hive, Lifted Crew, Break & Gridlok, as well as a host of dubplates off the eagerly awaited Evol Intent LP, which The Upbeats are tipping big things for.

Continuing to push the boundaries of performance in their last three dates of the New Zealand tour, The Upbeats went on to perform live; Dylan on electric guitar with a midi pickup and singing, Jeremy playing keys and midi trigger etc, newly found Sydney vocalist Georgie (featured on 'Nobody's Out There') & Optibreak on visuals, a show which is something to look out for in the future. Watch out for more live performances in 2008 and a host of new tracks, which they are hoping to complete before their tour begins in January.

Their production plan for '08 is focusing on their own tracks after numerous high profile collabs this year with artists such as State of Mind, Hive, Evol Intent, Ewun & Gridlok, as well as a remix for New Zealand favourites, The Shapeshifters. But as they tell me, touring offers unlimited possibilities for collaborations, and late night sessions!

Aside from touring, live performances and new tracks, the two also plan to branch out and get their teeth stuck into some different styles of music now that the LP is finished. Although branching out into other genres in '08 The Upbeats will not be shying away from D&B; next year will see the launch of their own label, Non Vogue. Predominantly an outlet for their own productions (although other artists could feature later down the line), Non Vogue is mostly all about The Upbeats. Watch out for the launch in early '08.

After talking to The Upbeats it's clear to see that their positive attitude as well as their dedication towards their music and the scene will continue to put them at the forefront of the genre. With every new track getting props and recognition, the launch of exciting new label, Non Vogue, promises to cement their place in the scene, and with even more projects to come it seems The Upbeats are only just getting started.

For booking info contact Tom @ GRAM Agency: grassrootsartists@gmail.com

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caspa & rusko

Double Trouble

words: Markle

Fabric is widely regarded as one of the finest clubs in the world, and the spin off CD compilations bearing the leviathan's brand name are widely respected tastemaker delights and hugely popular. So, some might say, it's about time they enlisted two dubstep DJ/producers to lay the foundations for number 37 of their 'Fabric Live' CD Series.

Enter Gary MaCann and Chris Mercer aka Caspa and Rusko, the two men behind one of the scene's biggest anthems: 'Cockney Thug'. They're currently riding a tsunami of hype and popularity. Indeed, the aforementioned anthem was played to 50,000 Arctic Monkey's fans at Lancashire Cricket Club by DJ Ross Allen earlier this year, surprising no-one more than an off-duty Skream, who immediately phoned Rusko to tell him. It also gained the evening playlist on BBC 1Xtra and support from key underground DJs including Diplo, Scratch Perverts, Sinden, TC & Clipz, Tayo and Claude Van Stroke who have been battering it at raves. And with a 24/7 global gig schedule, these lads couldn't be better placed to deliver a snapshot of the intense sub bass and hyperkinetic energy of dubstep tearing the roof off clubs across the globe right now.

Staying true to the scene's dubplate culture, Caspa and Rusko did the mix live, in just an hour and a half in Fabric's room 1. "They approached us on a Friday saying to us we need you to do a CD and we need it in by Monday," recalls Caspa. "We played in Sheffield on the Saturday together. So on the way back we got a pen and paper, in the car, he wrote his list, I wrote my list and we put them together. We spoke to everyone on Sunday about it, licensed it Monday morning, mixed it Monday afternoon."

"The good thing is we both had been bang out on the gigs, so we already knew which tunes work together." Rusko adds. "It's a Fabric Live CD, so it's a live set, as if you came to see us for an hour back to back, that's what you'd get."

The opportunity to put their beloved music onto a new platform isn't lost on the pair, "I think its history to be honest with you. It's a benchmark for the scene. Dubstep hasn't been taken to this level and this audience or market and it's gonna do things, not just for us, but also for the artists, the sound, everyone who is involved with it. It's gonna take it up a notch, which I think is brilliant," says Caspa.

Full to the brim with Rusko and Caspa material, the mix is also an electric ride through the latter's two labels, Dub Police and Sub Soldiers, and with the like of L-Wiz, The Others, Orien and new boy on the block, Unitz all featuring it could be suggested this is a somewhat narcissistic selection. Caspa begs to differ, "You've got people saying 'Err, it's just a Caspa and Rusko CD'. And yeah, that's what it is. That's what Fabric Live is, not a Now 45 of dubstep. They pick artists for the CD to mix what they play out," says Caspa vociferously. "What people fail to recognise is that Tes La Rok is on there, D1, Skream, Coki, Distance, L-Wiz and Quest are on there. There are 12 different artists amongst Rusko and me." Comparison with the latest Rinse CD from Skream provides further evidence that a staunchly producer led scene will, more often than not, draw from within when given the chance. However, the inclusion of Buraka Som Sistema's excellent remix of 'Cockney Thug' hints at further permutations that can enrich and expand the dubstep spectrum.

This world reknowned mix CD provides a poignant benchmark in dubstep's trajectory; many have watched its progress with keen anticipation. The resistance to sub genres and lazy categorisation is fuelled by the spectre of drum and bass, which is a now a sprawling beast divided and arguably weakened by its many parts and divisions. However, the unity is still strong within the dubstep scene, even as it spreads further and wider every day. So will there be a Roni Size Mercury Music Prize for a dubstep artist anytime soon? "Definitely. I think the way things are now it's open to anyone. I think it will be a vocal tune that will do it," says Caspa. "See, Skream is doing some wicked stuff like the Klaxons remix, so that's really pushing the boundaries. It's getting closer and closer, the only thing you've got to watch out for is someone doing a Britney Spears remix." At which point Rusko starts grinning. Caspa's not having it: "I'll fucking abandon you if you do!"

"There is a nice little message in the track listing, I'm not sure anyone will really pick it up, but the first title of the tune and the last title of the tune, when you put them together is 'Born To Do' by Caspa and 'Forever' by Conquest." I suggest tattoos. Caspa jokes with Rusko: "Super cheesy! I could get 'Born To Do It' and you could get 'Forever', darling."

'Caspa & Rusko: Fabric Live 37' is out now in all good record shops.

bad company

Ghost Of The Machine

words: Jon Ethics pic: Cleveland Aaron

Back in the late 1990s four modestly successful drum & bass artists united as a whole and changed this music forever. Unleashing the legendary 'The Nine' as their debut, Fresh, D-Bridge, Maldini and Vegas realised their potential collectively and became Bad Company, signaling the beginning of a new era in Drum & Bass.

From the success of that track alone this quartet found themselves launched to the very top of the game and their productions and DJ sets in demand at raves across the planet. A new standard had been set that was consolidated time after time with gargantuan, trend-setting tracks on Ram, Prototype and their very own BC Recordings. As the years wore on, the BC stamp on a record came to signify buy-on-sight quality as tracks like '4 Days', 'Nitrous' and 'Planet Dust' constantly sent the sound of BC, and Drum & Bass as a whole, to new heights.

As we know all good things must pass and by 2003, with innumerable anthems and three landmark albums beneath their belts, the foursome went their separate ways, forging their own successes in very different ends of the D&B soundscape.

It's been over four years since then, time that has seen the BC legend only strengthen and grow as whole new legions of fans and producers have discovered and enraptured themselves in the teched-out energy of the Bad Company sound. It only takes a few clicks on any internet forum to witness the awe their music still evokes and the respect with which it is held - no mean feat in a world as notoriously critical and puritanical as drum & bass can be.

With all this in mind, and with nearly every other major label repressing their past gems for the new generation of heads, it's not surprising that one of the most successful cliques drum & bass has ever known has got in on the act with the release of a vinyl triple pack featuring six of their biggest anthems and a special edition of their debut LP 'Inside The Machine'. Coming as a double CD, disc one is the original album re-mastered to 07 levels for all those who missed out first time; but it's disc two, entitled 'Lost & Found', that is the real incentive to grab. Featuring ten tracks that never found their way to release for a myriad of reasons, long sought-after tunes like 'Sneakers', 'Tendon' and 'Fuck Miami' are finally available to satisfy our breakbeat lust.

With the LP and vinyl in the shops the BC guys are busy on the media merry-go-round when ATM arrives for a chat. All four members are in good form and ready to spill some history of the past and intentions for the future.

So, you're all back together in one room. Is this the Bad Company reunion everyone's been waiting for?
D-Bridge: No!

Fresh: One things for certain. Bad Company is definitely not reforming.

Vegas: We are all really busy doing our own things; D-Bridge has Exit going really well, myself and Maldini are busy with our label Bad Taste and Fresh has obviously got his thing going on.

Fresh: We're back together today because of the release of the 'Best Of' vinyl EP and the 'Inside The Machine' repress. It's the original full album and a bonus CD, 'Lost & Found' that features tracks that never made it out before - for all kinds of reasons - that people have been asking us about over the last few years.

Tell us about those tracks. Surely they're more than just the lesser productions that never made it through quality control?
Vegas: Yeah, some of the tracks on there just weren't right at the time for whatever project we were working on and some of them are ones we really did just lose and have only recently found in the bottom of boxes or whatever.

Fresh: It's nice to finally get them out though, as most of those tracks weren't the massive dancefloor tunes that people expected back then, they were more personal and experimental ones, that give a good sense of us and what we were doing beyond tracks like 'Nitrous' or whatever that people would normally know us for.

It's been a good few years since anything came from the Bad Company camp. You've said this is definitely not the beginning of a BC reunion, so what's the motivation behind the album and the vinyl repress?
Fresh: We all got together a while ago to sort out the label, shut it all down and close the business sides of the label up. We were sorting out all the tracks out for digital, so that they could go on sale as MP3s, and once we were together and we had pretty much the entire back catalogue sorted out, we kind of thought we can either just let it all go forever, or we can do something with the music - the tunes that came out and the ones that didn't make it. There were those 10 tracks you see on 'Lost & Found' that never got released and we realised we'd be idiots not to do something with them.

Vegas: With all those tracks there, we just really felt that the right thing to do was to release one last package as Bad Company. The re-mastered album, the 'lost' tracks and the vinyl represses of the really big tunes, together it's almost the definitive collection, if you like.

Maldini: It kind of felt like it was a responsibility to do this really. The D&B crowd is pretty young today, so there are a lot of people who not only have never really heard a lot of those unreleased tracks that are on the 'Lost & Found' disc but that didn't ever get the chance to buy the really big tunes of ours on vinyl either.

So, it wasn't for the opportunity to do a Spice Girls and milk a few more pounds and pennies from a loyal fanbase?
Fresh: No. Definitely not. We could make a lot more money focusing our efforts and attentions on other things than drum & bass.

Why did you choose the 'Inside The Machine' album for re-mastering and re-release?
D-Bridge: That was our landmark album, the one that broke us through and established us.

Vegas: That album is the one that is always referred to as a classic. It really shows all our separate influences and directions coming together to form a whole. That was an amazing time in our lives so it's kind of natural that it should be 'Inside The Machine' that gets re-done.

You've all experienced success since going your separate ways, in very different areas of the scene. What does the future hold for you all?
Maldini: Vegas and me are busy with our label Bad Taste, we're really excited about the Upbeats LP 'Nobody's Out There'. It's like a D&B fairytale, the amount of thought and artistry that's gone into it, with the artwork that comes with it, the videos. It gives people that real incentive to buy it and not just download it.

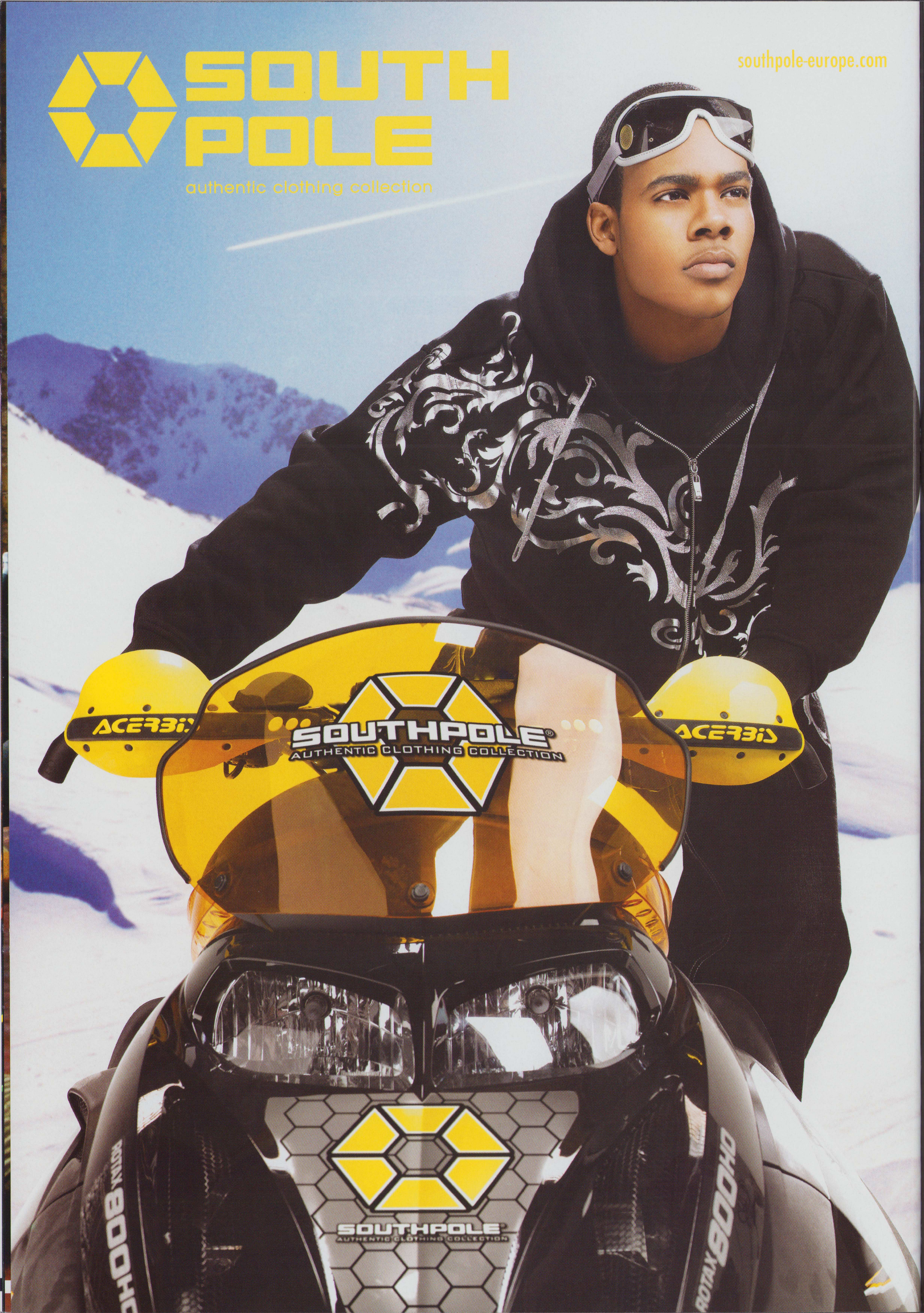
Vegas: I've just started a dubstep label as well, Cultured Beats, with Hijack - the first release is him and Skream, his brother. It's funny cause I've known Hijack ever since his Inta Natty days and since then his little brother has become Skream, and absolutely massive in that scene. We're gonna go to Miami for the Winter Music Conference and be pushing the Cultured Beats thing over there.

D-Bridge: Well at the moment for me, it's all working towards the Steve Spacek solo LP on Exit. That will be out next year. Also I'm busy with own project the Aptitude Series, which is coming off really well, very limited things with the artwork complementing the music. Goldie has done the art for the next release so that's something I'm really looking forward to.

Fresh: I've got the 12 on Violence that should be out soon. I've been doing a lot of breaks stuff like 'Soundweapon' too and working with Deekline & Wizard who are wicked. But the big thing for me is my new LP; I did what I wanted to do with the last album and that was great with all the collobarations and guests, but for the next album I'm gonna go back to straight-up, underground D&B.

'Inside The Machine: Redux' and 'Bad Company Classics' are both available in shops now.

TEN OF THE BEST BAD COMPANY CLASSICS
(in no particular order):
Hornet
Pulse
Planet Dust
The Nine
Flashback (Tumpa)
Four Days
Nitrous
Torpedo
Brainscan
Spacehopper (Triton's Universe)



Gimme 5 with dj mosus

SCHWIPE

If you're a party animal, you won't feel comfortable in anything else but Schwipe. I like to party and I like to look fresh, so when I came across a black and green striped scarf back in 2003, as the London winter months took their toll, my Schwipe scarf gave me hope for brighter days. 4 years later the brighter day has finally arrived and I find myself in Australia. I am in the heart of Schwipe country draped in a flesh-eating brain print sweater from Schwipe's last range, I toast a dirty martini to the sun god and take another peak at the forthcoming Schwipe look book.

Back in September 2006 Misa Glisovic and Tim Everist opened their store 'Don't Come' in Melbourne. "Our store/gallery is named 'Don't Come'. We're located up the top of a hard to find stairwell, in a weird old arcade, in the centre of Melbourne. We're putting on a bi-monthly show to exhibit people's art work who we like, we've had shows by Mike Giant, Stefan Marx, Sanna Charles and we've got upcoming shows from Neckface, Thomas Jeppe and So Me."

In March 2007 with over 100 t-shirt designs and 15 ranges under their collective belt, Schwipe celebrated with an exhibition entitled ' 7 Years And We Still Broke'.

Their next range ' Party Animal ' is out in March 2008 and I strongly recommend that you check out their website or visit their flagship Melbourne store - that's only if you're not suffering from excessive partying as Schwipe designs have been known to test a weak stomach and mess with your mind. Swipe yours and roam free. Peace!

www.schwipe.com.au / www.dontcome.com.au

24.
'ruffle' duffle
'record skip' t-shirt
'organic' skirt

6.
'disco head' cap
'Jukebox' varsity jacket
'record skip' t-shirt
'max' jeans

10.
'organ donor' hood
'razzle dazzle' tshirt
'albi' jean

13.
'pardy' knit
'razzle dazzle' tshirt
'hounded' pants

29.
'droog' sweater
'max' jean (mens)

THTC

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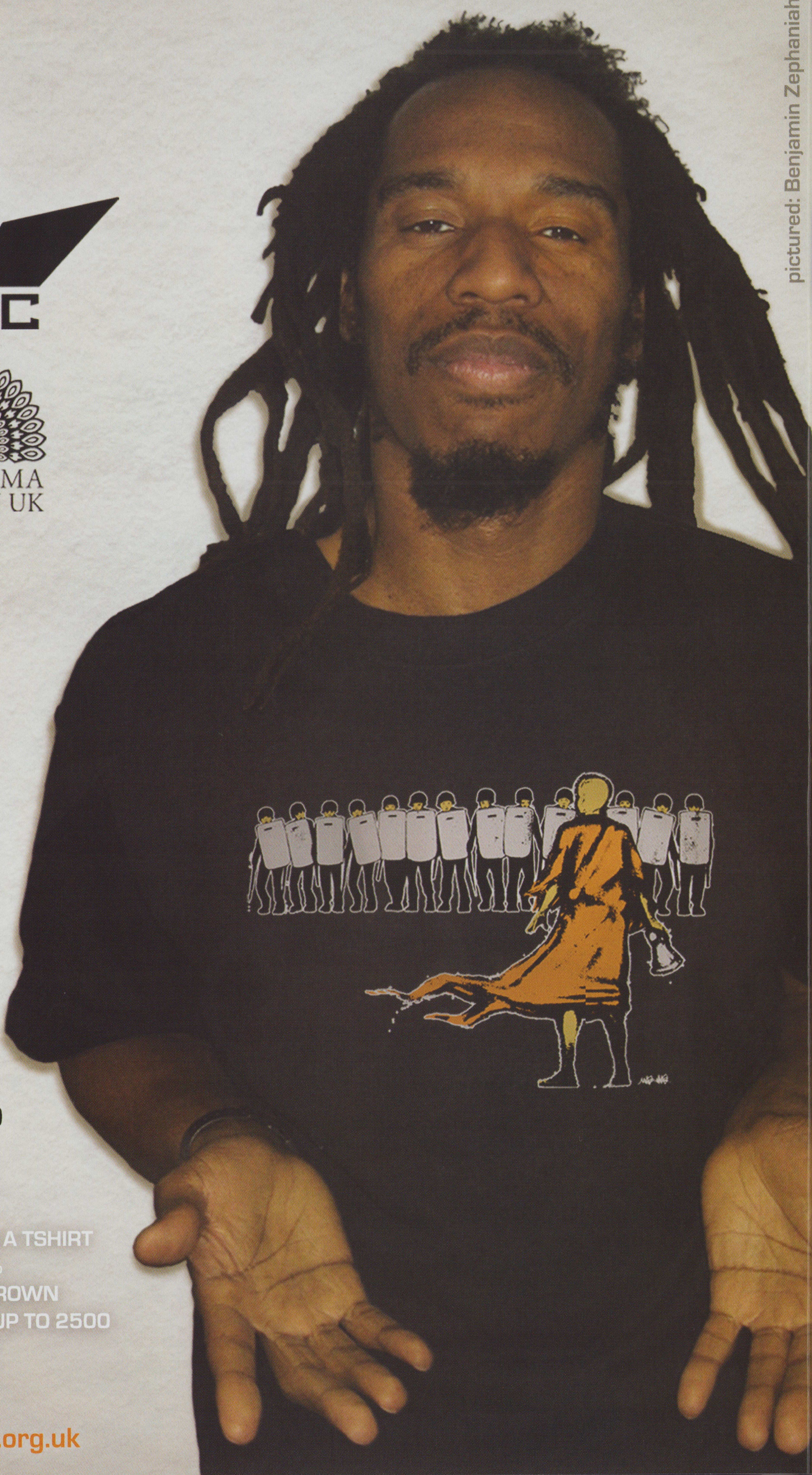

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Ed Solo & Skool of Thought

Deep Concentration

words: Joe Gamp

Hardly in need of any major introduction, this pair have a reputation for being a staple part of the breaks lovers' diet. Responsible, singularly, for many great feats (Ed Solo has remixed Pendulum and Groove Armada to wide acclaim, and Skool has a club night and a record label that has released a truck load of tunes), united together, the world is their oyster; and the takeover is well underway.

When asked about their beginnings, Ed states, "We linked up through Krafty Kuts; he had a record shop down here in Brighton in the late nineties. Conveniently we had a studio above his shop and through it we met lots of people and it all grew from there."

The boys had an amazing 2007 together, apart from crafting a debut album, running Supercharged, one of the best nights in breaks, and releasing singles like 'When I Was A Yout', the duo were also approached by website Breakspoll, to curate and mix their third mix instalment. "It's always an honour to be able to represent your scene," Lloyd humbly admits. "It was like a follow on from a series I mixed in the past called Heavyweight Breaks. The Breakspoll thing seemed a natural progression. I love the whole process that goes behind creating a mix; picking and selecting the tunes and getting in the vibe!"

Their album has been hailed as a milestone of the creativity and all embracing attitude of the breaks scene. Fresh, vibrant and unashamedly eclectic, it breathes fresh air over the scene, making it more accessible, and subsequently, more popular, by grabbing influences and gelling them together. "I haven't been involved in soundsystem culture really, I just love the music," admits Lloyd when quizzed about the heavy influence of dub reggae culture. "I've been getting into reggae and dub the past five or six years, and its influence shines through on the album. Although we haven't been involved with the scene directly, it seems that its bearing has filtered down through the generations. I never used to listen to dub or reggae, but I guess we are the third generation, and it's evolved into the sounds of today," explains Lloyd, "hopefully people will listen to our sounds in ten years time, and link us back to nowadays. How the music developed and where it came from."

Whether intended or not, 'Random Acts Of Kindness' sounds like it has been crafted to encompasses a rich history of music, from the Tubby-esque flavours of 'Raspberry Dub' to the modern sounds of dubstep with 'Splurge', keeping in step with bass culture and musicality, its attention to detail is, in fact, quite meticulous. "We were very critical of ourselves, and when we finished, we would sit down and go over it again. We were always looking to add another element and make it sound different and fresh. We spent a lot of time on this project; it's an actual album rather than a load of incoherent tracks thrown together on a CD. We spent time working out the singles we would release, spent time on the track list and order, everything. We wanted to make it a real journey."

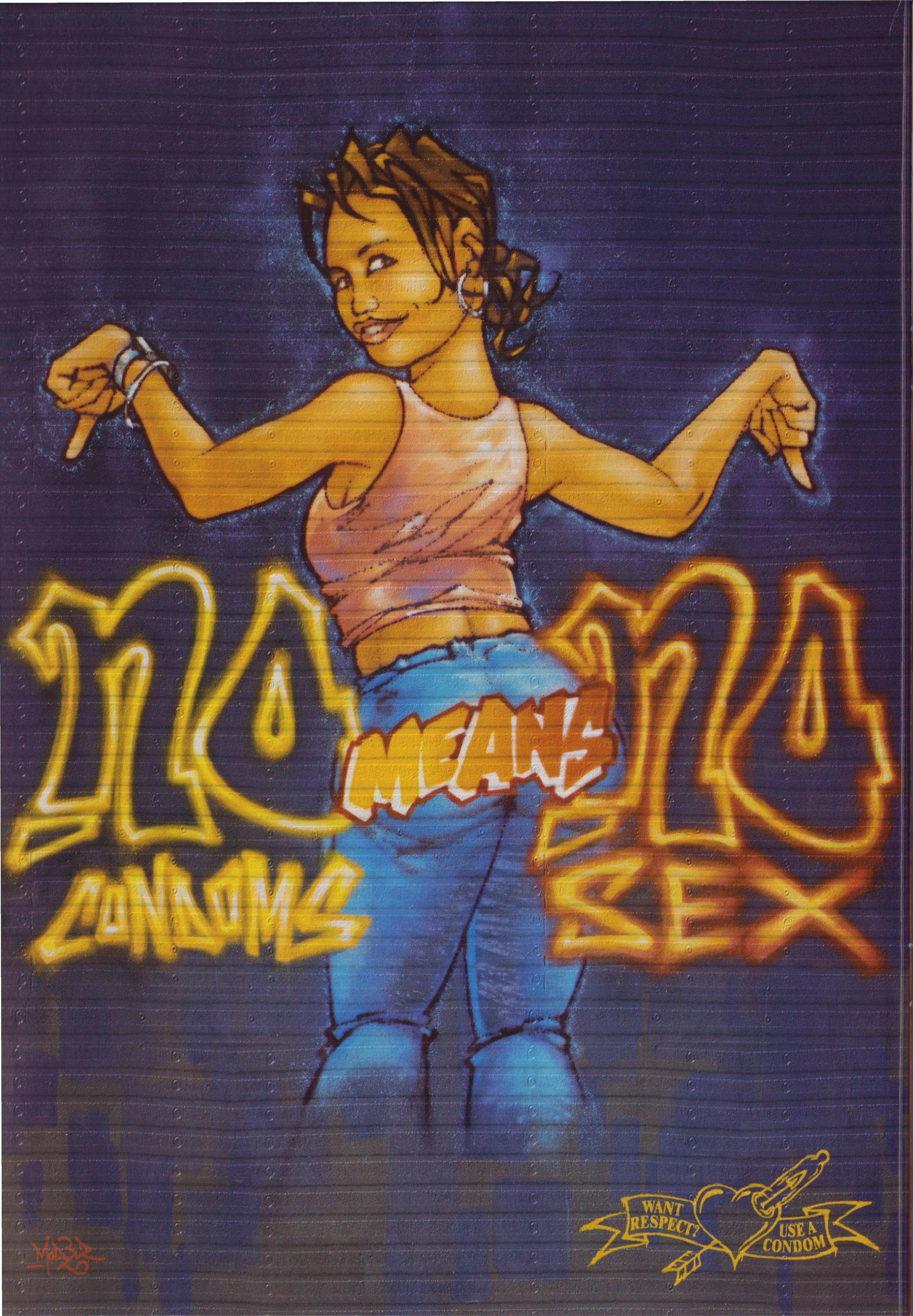
And a musical journey it's shaped up to be. Rising above the stereotyped conventions of the current breaks scene, the boys explain to me the importance of instrumentation and their collaborations with musicians, including album MC favourite, Darrison. "I've known him for ages now" states Ed fondly, "he's always around and I chat to him quite a lot, it just seemed natural that we worked on some tracks together really."

"We had a really talented bloke called Jim doing live guitar riffs" adds Lloyd. "Plus another guy named Johnny played saxophone on a few of the tracks, plus loads of live bass guitar and keys from others. It'll be a lot harder to tell what's live and what's programmed on the tracks, as we spent ages engineering the sound," he lets on. "We stayed away from sampling though," he reinforces, "it's all original stuff on our album. We went for the whole song writing element proper."

Of course, the boys also dabble with heavyweight drum and bass in amongst the other twisted styles. But what inspired them to cover Incognitos club classic 'Always There', Dee-bee style? "It was a bootleg, about two or three years ago now," explains Ed. "The DJ responsible never put it out, so we asked if we could use it on the album, we got the clearance from the publishing guy and decided to stick it on. It was quite a quick process." The track also holds an extra surprise according to Ed. "We actually got Beanie Man to re-sing the vocals; a lot of people were surprised because it sounds like a female vocalist. We spent a lot of time on the voice and Beanie did a good job and just ran with it," beams Ed proudly.

To conclude, Ed Solo and Skool of Thought are redefining what we class as the average breakbeat but the duo remain humble. "We're just trying to inject some musicality and put a bit of heart and soul back into it. The electronic process of making music is very effective but sometimes it can lack the soul and feeling. We wanted this to be a record you can listen to in the club or driving the car or at home" Lloyd sums up. "I think if we didn't try to change and diversify the sound, it would be a too boring for us really," adds Ed

"I don't think we're reinventing the wheel as such, just you know....adding another one on to the cart!" jokes Lloyd, followed by raucous fits of laughter. It's just another day, and another chapter in the continuing adventures of these two breakbeat stars.



metabeats

Metaphysical Expressions

words: Jesse Keene

It's been a long time since something erupted onto the hip-hop scene, injecting a new life and a sense of progression into the somewhat saturated market. Metabeats is the Cardiff-based producer doing just that with his debut album, 'Metaphysical'. He has set the standard high for any act superseding this release in 2008, so we felt that its time to give you a future shock of hip-hop. Listen up.

Tell us a bit about who you are, how you got into producing and what inspires you to create beats?
I'm Metabeats, known as Chesus to my colleagues. They decided to name me that though, I was Che before. I haven't come from a musical family or studied it at school, but I was lucky enough to be brought up around good music. My family had a good range of stuff like Miles Davis, Santana, Barry White and Prince. Then my brother got me into jungle and my first record I ever bought was 'Fire' by Demolition Man. I've still got it too. I started playing garage music around '97, but I was heavily into Wu-Tang and all the affiliates like Killarmy and Sunz of Man. I DJ'd in Ibiza when I was 16 and I've been playing for about 14 years now. The production side came into play around seven years ago when I got some equipment on tick. My inspiration comes from all things. Generally hearing good music that I think is interesting or just sounds cool, but like I said, the upbringing helped a lot. That's definitely given me an open mind towards music and appreciated other genres whether cool or not. Music's some good shit.

What do you think makes your music creatively unique from other producers?
I really don't know as far as the process goes, but whenever I make a beat it's like freestyling. I never go in with a track I wanna make. I just go in and do what I do on the fly. Even when I go in and have an idea it usually ends up something completely different, but still comes out heavy because of the energy I put into it. Most importantly I don't try and make a track like the next man's I've just heard.

Being based in Cardiff, how do you feel that the scene is being represented there, what crews do you rate and is there a base for new talent in the area?
The scene is better than ever I would say. There's a lot more people trying to take it to the next level and Associated Minds have played a big part in that with the standards of music and artists and how they put them out. The likes of Quiet Poison, Joe Blow and Gritty, they got some good stuff dropping soon so look out for that. The city is really fresh and still growing so it's good to be in the forefront of that, but the reason people are taking notice is because we're not just pushing ourselves around here, we're doing it all over the shop.

How do you feel that the UK hip-hop scene is developing on a whole, do you think that the talent that we have here really gets the props it deserves?
No it doesn't, but that isn't going to be for long. A lot more artists are getting across the pond now and working with some big names and that opens the gates for the rest of us. To be honest, if you could compare US to UK right now, I think the UK would tip it coz the amount of garbage overseas right now is embarrassing. It's just bubblegum. Half these cats out now you won't even remember in two years. The UK's cred. is definitely taking a turn for the better, I can assure you.

Please tell us about the album 'Metaphysical' - how long did it take to put the project together and how did you decide which MCs to work with?
It took roughly eight months to put together. It was a bit like a puzzle I guess. I had the tracks pretty much finished by about six months in and then it was just about putting the pieces together and actually making it sound like an album with the flow and everything as opposed to it just sounding like a load of tracks chucked on a CD. The MCs were people I was already working with at the time, apart from Beleaf, who is on the 'White Girl' track. That was a link I made from Miami because we were doing an online radio show which was reaching over there. He heard some of my tracks and wanted to get busy so I just sent the track over and that's what he came back with. It was that simple. I hope the next phase goes together as well as this one did.

Do you think that the album has had the impact that you wanted or do you feel that its reception has gone further than your own expectations?
Most definitely! If anything it's exceeded my expectations. I knew it was a solid record and I wanted to put it out as soon as I could cos there's just so much bullshit around. I felt the market was saturated with the same old shit and I think people needed to hear what I was creating. I'm not someone who tries to be different, but my music is my music and the individuality comes from that. Even people like Andy Smith of Portishead gave me a heads up. To me that was a nice feeling.

If you had a chance to work with any artist alive or dead who would it be and why?
Anyone who knows me knows it's gonna be J.Dilla. He is my idol and my hero near enough. Everything he's done is amazing. I would just be a sponge around him. Ghost and MF Doom, simply because there's no one else on the planet like them. I think Doom is gifted, some people don't get him, but I get exactly what is going on. Stevie Wonder - no explanation, he's just a genius. Also Madlib, that would be cool, but I would probably be too high to work with him.

What other projects are you getting involved in for 2008, and will there be any live shows to promote the album?
We're doing another show following the launch party on the 6th December in Buffalo Cardiff, plus we will be doing forthcoming shows in the New Year, but we've also been doing a lot of radio. We did Westwood on Sunday - that was cool. Project wise I've got some forthcoming Willo Wispa material. Also some Ralph Rip Shit, Mudmowth, Joe Blow, Ruffstylz, Gritty. Also Cervantis and Skamma from Quiet Poison. Busy is the aim of the game right now. I gotta keep it moving, innit!

Grab yourself a copy of the LP soon as and keep those ears to the ground for more Metabeats material. www.myspace.com/metaphysicalish

dom & roland

No Compromise

words: Ben Wilmott pic: Cleveland Aaron

Dominic Angas, better known to the world as Dom & Roland, admits to ATM in typically frank fashion, "I think I lost the plot for a while." Now running his own Dom & Roland Productions label, Dom is talking about the records he made towards the end of his time with the now defunct Moving Shadow imprint. He reckons he got caught up in what else was going on in drum and bass at the time and lost his way. "People kept saying to me, especially abroad," he tells us, "'why don't you make records like you used to?' It's something I hear about a lot of producers who've been around for a while. So I decided I would."

Not that he's blaming the label. "No way," he says when asked if running his own label means more creative freedom, "I always had total freedom. Moving Shadow were always concerned with the artist realising their vision before everything else - that's probably why they closed." The trademark Dom & Roland sound, as described by Dom himself is "deep, dark and with an original, visual vibe, like film music with beats…you know, something with a bit of thought gone into it beyond just getting the kick and the snare loud and having a riff that everyone can hum."

It's a sound to which he's returned in style on his fourth album, 'Through The Looking Glass,' with the title – from the surreal, near-psychedelic children's book 'Alice Through The Looking Glass' by Lewis Carroll – very much of the imaginary film score school. The album, says Dom, should be like "a series of different rooms, each track is like a different place for the listener to go to." The idea of the visual, cinematic score set to beats also surfaces in 'Tuttle's Nightmare', named after a character in Terry Gilliam's 'Brazil', and Dom refers to the militant futurism of 'Deckard's Theme' as being 'Bladerunner'-inspired. It's a flavour of Dom's that you can trace back to the host of techstep classics he engineered as part of the No-U-Turn collective and with individual members Trace, Ed Rush, Optical, Fierce and Nico.

Although for Dom, his debut album 'Industry' has always been his best. "All the tracks on it were very different from each other," he says, "and that's something I wanted to get back to on 'Through The Looking Glass.' I hate those albums where it sounds like someone's just done 12 versions of the same track and they all sound basically the same. Thinking of classic D&B albums like 'Wormhole' (by Ed Rush & Optical) and Goldie's 'Timeless', all the tracks are all very different."

He does, however, say that running his own label is a delicate balance between different considerations. Dom wants the records to be original as well as dancefloor-friendly. He wants them to have hooks without playing the cheese card. "It would be easy for me to put a cheesy Pendulum riff in there and sell the track," he says, "I don't mean any disrespect to Pendulum and what they do, they're nice guys, but it wouldn't be me."

Basically, he wants to sell records but hates the commercial compromises of the music industry and indeed consumerism at large. For instance, when ATM expresses a worry that his series of gigs between Christmas Eve and Boxing Day will leave him precious time to open his pressies, he replies: "I'm not big on Christmas. I like the idea of sitting around with friends and family when everything's closed and you can't do anything, it's turned into an excuse for people to sell you things."

So, while Dom wants to sell MP3s of the album, being released as six individual 12"s, he's decided to hold back the download versions of each vinyl release for three weeks. "The way I'm looking at is like an author does with books," he says, "you know, the vinyl is like the hardback and then the paperback comes out three weeks later. I love vinyl, I grew up on it, and for me it has always sounded the best." And when the sixth 12" is released in March, the double CD version of the album drops, with full and unexpurgated versions of not only the entire album but also the DRM label's complete back catalogue. "I'm hoping to compete with the downloaders," he says, "because it's going to be under a tenner for 24 tracks, and if you wanted to download all the tracks it would cost you twenty quid."

Internet and file sharing in particular have undeniably played a part in the drop in record sales, Dom says. The days when a decent D&B record would sell six or seven thousand copies are gone, he reckons, these days two or three is achievable but hard work. Nor is he impressed with the new music technology's lack of quality. "In the 1970s and the 1980s," he says, "people wanted to get the best possible system to listen to their music on. Now people seem to be happy to listen to something on a mobile phone! Having devoted quite a lot of my life to engineering and trying to make things sound as good as possible, it's quite upsetting that the real audiophile aspect seems to be dying out."

At least, we agree, the DJ end of business is booming, although in typical style Dom says: "Yeah, although I liked it better when we were all playing all over the world and selling loads of records!" Still, he played out practically every weekend in 2007 and as well as visiting UK clubs he tours Australia, America and Europe every year. Is there anywhere new emerging on the global scene we should take note of? "Siberia," he says, "the kids there really like to party and they're really passionate about anything new, they really clasp it to their bosom. You'd be surprised if you saw the clubs out there, they're massive and everything's really well organised, you know, with really great sound systems. There aren't many planes out there so you have to do a lot of the travelling in the car or on the train, so everything's like an adventure. Sometimes I do feel like Michael Palin!"

At the same time, he feels, this resurgence in DJ culture could be responsible for what he sees as a dumbing down of D&B recently. "I think that's why people are making the music they're making at the moment," he reckons, "they're making tunes just to get DJ bookings because they know that's where the money is." He feels the industry's been focussed on superficial tunes with a short shelf life lately. At the same time, he can see the tide turning as new converts to D&B, of which there have been many in recent years, begin to scratch beneath the surface and discover its deeper, darker sides.

He is certainly confident about the projects he's got lined up for 2008. First up there's going to be a No-U-Turn revival of sorts, by way of collaborations with Fierce and Nico. "Fierce I've kept in pretty close touch with," says Dom, "it's only him and Rhyme Time that I've kept in touch with from that original techstep crew. I haven't seen Nico for a long time. Fierce told me to give him a call because he was into making music again, so I rang up and said 'hello'. It should be interesting."

There's also a plan for another single with Gridlok and at the other end of the musical spectrum, he's also teaming up with two of Ninja Tune's finest. Experimental breakbeat maverick Amon Tobin and hip-hop turntablist DJ Vadim might not seem like obvious musical bedfellows, but in their respective fields they do share a certain obsessive attention to detail and crisp production values some would say bordered on audiophile behaviour. "I like what they're both up to," says Dom of the project, "and Vadim I knew from school."

Whatever weird and wonderful musical concoctions come to fruition as a result of these pairings, no-one could ever accuse Dom of resting on his laurels rather than taking creative risks. From the early days of No U Turn to the present day, his mission to take D&B 'Through The Looking Glass' and on to places it's never been before, has stayed completely un-compromised. It's not necessarily the quickest or easiest route to success, but if the queue of allies, old and new, willing to join him in his stand against the over-functional, disposable nature of average dancefloor fodder is anything to go by, it's one that's finally paying dividends.

www.domandroland.com
www.myspace.com/domandrolandproductions

LOAD NEWS!

Dubstep

As the Dubstep scene grows and grows we at Load media are pleased to be distributing the following labels:
3.5 Recordings, Mode Recordings, Ascension, 2nd drop Recordings, 10 bag, Bisto boots, Noppa, Mission Impossible and Bass Corrupt...Watch this space for more labels to be announced soon.

Forthcoming Dubstep In January

10 BAG 10BAG002
ITCHY ROBOT – A. Raw / AA. Don't Stop
Sister label to 3.5 records this label also set to smash the dubstep scene. Jan 2008
2ND DROP 2NDRP003
CLOUDS – A. Mighty Eyeball Rays / AA. Healing of the Nation with Natural Marcus Talks of the Prejudiced (Clouds Version)
This label has established it self as one of the top dubstep labels in the scene right now after 2 releases!!! These boys get their third release out for the year. Watch out for this label next year big ting agwan...Jan 2008
Noppa 002 – DJG lower8 – a) premaster b) late care B2) 12th planet and swytch – Tonka
Tes La Rok brings his second release and boy what killer tunes we have in store for this release!!!
Jan 2008

Watch out for more booty bizz from the Bisto crew coming soon ....ahhhh Bisto, you know its all gravy

Drum 'n' Bass

SIDECHAIN MUS[illegible]
Hailing from [illegible] with a string [illegible]

Sidechain Music set off in 2006 to unleash a wide range of upfront drum-n-bass: streetwise and musical styles from dark and deep to liquid or jump-up, Sidechain promotes quality beats by prolific producers like Digital or Audio Unit as well as hot shotters like Camo or Funktastics. The label rooster speaks an international language, Sidechain headz are found in the Frankfurt headquarter, in London, France, Austria or Germany! The latest Sidechain release sees Germany's veteran Bassface Sascha teaming up with riders of the deep and musical sound from Frankfurt. DJ Franksen and London born Mike Romeo. Their "Promised Land" has been a hot rotating dubplate on the airwaves with Chrissy Criss and stuck in the box of Bryan Gee who dubbed the tune "dutty, m8!" A big and dirty tune with extrasoul, was what the boys wanted. Sidechain bet they got it! The next Sidechain will have DJ Suv keeping up the Sidechain philosophy of putting out fine tunery every second month. Upcoming releases - from Digital, Sappo and Cabbie! Plus some of the Sidechain catalogue still in stores:
Sidechain-Music 004 (Mixmaster DOC - Love Dub / LeLutin & Generic - Circular)
Sidechain-Music 005 (L-Plus feat. MC Coppa - Poppin / Madcap - Subject)

forthcoming

New for [illegible] forthcoming to the [illegible] camp

We are now close to the 40th release to this imprint and it comes in the form of two monsters from Mosses with tracks entitled 'Heavier than hell' and 'Watergate'.
For the next few releases they have tracks from Human Factor, the new emerging talent from Brazil toted by many to be the next big thing... Also lined up are tracks from Spectrasoul as the label line up an EP which is gonna be hot. If you have not got the nu directions mix CD by the Insiders then you better make sure you do big tunes a plenty. SISTER label Diverse products has 2 deep numbers from the Mixmaster Doc 'Umpteen time' has a bline to die for whist 'Dreams' is one for the headz.

Dylan's imprints Freak and obscene see a multitude if releases this New Year the first of which saw the promo run in December, Dylan turns to Muffler for Freak 027 and boy what a result big beats bad bass need I say more. Obscene 018 sees the Debut release for Future Signal these boys have been hard at work after there exclusive mp3 only release of 'No Soul' by Audio (Only available through the load media website). With tracks like 'Death Mask' and 'Grime House' they are going to make a big impact.
Habit Recordings reaches its 21st release, and its from the man of the moment Limewax after the massive success of the first release on his own imprint LB Recordings and the string of successful releases on Lost soul Recordings and his debut lp early in 2007, he brings two killers to habit recordings. Also from habit we will see the full release of SPL's EP as we see the second EP in after the massive SECT EP. Hbtep002 has three dance floor smashers and one of his own dark style Dubstep destroyers.
After the success of their releases on Deadly Records the Dub alley Duo get their very own imprint. This label is set for big things as the boys have a string of big tunes to come this year. Starting the label off with two tracks from them 'Cocaine Baztard' is a dance floor mover backed with 'Wine Stained Bappers' this was an instant sell out on promo, so get your copies when they arrive.
Climate Recordings hailing from Australia join Load Media and January will see the full release of the second release to the label by Safire this guy needs no introduction and these 2 tracks are wicked tech style dance floor tracks. The third release will see the talented Rregula with tunes called Downtime and Invasion which also has his friend Mastermynd, and again this release will haves heads turning.

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L.O.A.D MEDIA

appleblim
Dubstep Allstar

words: Chris Gumbleton pic: Andrew D Rankin

Having just mixed the latest 'Dubstep Allstars' CD, Appleblim is set to become one of the dubstep scene's biggest names. It was for this reason that I found myself stood outside his house, finger pinning the doorbell to the wall, struggling in vain to be heard above the torrents of bass emanating from within. Thankfully, due to the wonders of mobile communication, it was not too long before I was being welcomed into the warmth, with a kind smile and the offer of a brew.

The first thing that strikes you when talking to 31-year-old Appleblim (real name Laurie Osborne) is his overwhelming love of music. Whether extolling the virtues of dubstep, or of an obscure indie band, he is like a kid at Christmas, barely able to contain his joy and excitement. It comes as no surprise therefore that dubstep is not the first music that he has been actively involved with.

"I've been making music since I was 14/15. I used to play bass in a band. I moved to London when I was 18, back in 1994. I played in the band for eight years and it was the reason that I moved to London, so I was heavily involved in that. We put our own records out; we had an album, 7 inches and stuff. That was also when I first started discovering jungle."

So how did he end up getting into dubstep? "A friend of mine, called Deep Thought, recommended that me and my friend went and checked out this new club night called FWD>>. We did and we absolutely fell in love with it. Before that we'd been going to a lot of electonica nights, like Rephlex Records and all that kind of thing. There was a night called Refreshed that we used to go to a lot. Before that it was jungle and drum and bass, and then before that it was rave. For us FWD>> was the excitement of music back again. When all the electronica seemed to be getting a bit boring and up its own arse, what we wanted was what I think rave is; experimental, sample based music. Walking into FWD>> was a dream come true."

FWD>> (just in front of the speaker stacks to be exact) was also to become the birthplace of his and Shackleton's Skull Disco vision. Inspired by what they'd heard there, they set about twisting it into their own warped take on the dubstep sound, startling both listeners and critics in the process. Appleblim insists however that making music is not something that comes naturally to him.

"I'm more of a consumer and mimicker of music. I find raw creativity quite hard. When I was a bass player I always found it a lot easier to arrange than to compose. I actually find making music quite difficult, but being involved in music, being around it and being near it is definitely something that I have to do."

This honest response is typical of Appleblim and serves only to increase my curiosity as to how he makes his music. "Personally I use Fruity Loops and a lot of samples. I sample a lot of weird stuff and try and twist it up as much as possible. I don't use many synths or anything like that. I use a lot of the onboard things on Fruity and basically try and mess them up so that they're not recognisable as things that come from it. I actually like working with quite a limited palette. I've never really got into having lots of synths, I can understand why people do, but personally I'm just not into that whole techy thing - I just use the bare materials. I think that once you've got a sampler, you've got basically every sound under the sun available to you anyway. I just try and sample anything and slow it down, speed it up, stretch it, just do anything to get different textures and atmospheres."

So how did the 'Dubstep Allstars' CD come about? "I got asked to play FWD>>, I can't remember how long ago now, it must be over a year ago, maybe a bit more. Sarah from Ammunition (Ammunition run FWD>> and Tempa) asked me to play a little warm up down there. I was very nervous about it, but I gave it a go. I just kept doing those every now and again and then she put me on a little bit later. She's definitely very into pushing all the different shades of whatever dubstep is. I was blown away when she asked me to do the CD. I didn't think that it would ever happen, so I'm pleased, and hopefully it will be a good representation of some talented producers."

With one of the scene's greatest accolades now under his belt, what does the future hold for Appleblim? "I'm not entirely sure! I've done two collaborations with Peverelist, which has been a lot of fun and I'm really pleased with the results. They're going to be out on Skull Disco as soon as possible, so hopefully more collaborations on that tip. Also more Skull Disco stuff, helping to promote what we've got in store with Shackleton, which is a very exciting project of his newer stuff as well as some remixes that I think people are going to be blown away by. Obviously continuing to DJ and source music, which is what I love anyway, so hopefully more of that."

And starting a label? "Oh yeah! Applepips. The first release is all sorted, it's going to be a 12" by Martyn. Two tunes, one of them called 'Suburbia', which you might have heard in Kode 9's sets and in my sets, and a tune called 'All I Have Is Memories' which is really, really amazing."

'Dubstep Allstars' Volume 6, mixed by Appleblim, is due for release on Tempa late January 2008.

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audio
On The Edge

words: Joel Stein pic: Zen Inoya

Gareth Greenall, aka Audio, really needs no introduction. For those of you who've been hibernating, in Guantanamo Bay, wearing military-grade ear plugs for the last five years, here it is: As the main creative force behind Resonant Evil, he made his name with releases on the likes of Renegade Hardware, G2, Outbreak and Moving Shadow, having been drawn to drum and bass after hearing Ed Rush & Optical's seminal 1998 LP, 'Wormhole'. As a solo artist, his dark, atmospheric production has gone from strength to strength.

2007 has seen tracks released on Habit, Freak and Subtitles, as well as a selection of remixes, notably his punishing update of Black Sun Empire's 'The Cooler'. With his massively anticipated debut LP set to drop in early 2008, forthcoming remixes of tracks by Jade, Limewax, The Sect, and ongoing DJ appearances at Therapy Sessions events worldwide, Audio's reputation as a leading figure in the scene and a pioneer of 'twisted techy darkness' looks well deserved. This month ATM caught up with the man himself to discuss how things are going…

Congratulations on becoming a father. Do you think drum and bass will still be going strong by the time your son's old enough to rave?
I'm not sure to be honest, I would like to think so, d'n'b has changed so much over the years that I've been part of, it's hard to say. I would say, like most people do, as long as there are the producers pushing the sound they create in whatever style that may be, d'n'b will be rock solid.

I've heard you mainly use Reason for production. Is the title of the new LP ('To The Edge Of Reason') a tribute to this fact?
Definitely, the program in my opinion is amazing and has let me express myself in any way I see fit. I get sick of people putting it down, but its funny, those are usually the people who aren't at the level they want to be at. It was actually my mum who came up with the name; it just seemed to work on so many levels.

How much did you learn working with Resonant Evil? How was the transition to working as a solo artist? Did it take any time to unearth your own musical identity?
I definitely learned a lot about the industry, labels and getting knocked by people who think they're Jay Z, but overall the whole thing was a great experience. As for working solo, I came from writing on my own to form Resonant Evil so there was no big transition to go back.

What hardware do you use in the studio?
I don't use any hardware anymore, just Reason on my laptop and my Mackie 824 monitors. I used to use hardware in the Resonant Evil studio - Akai 5000 sampler, compressors, desk etc, but I never felt completely at home with them as I was rewiring Reason at the same time, so anything I did on Res Evil tracks I did in that. I decided to switch fully and haven't looked back.

Do you have a preference for working alone or doing collabs?
I love working solo; it just means you're in full control. I don't compromise on anything, and you find when more than one person is involved there has to be that level of compromise and that's something I find quite hard when it comes to music production.

Your new track 'Exposed' incorporates an ominous sample that warns of an imminent nuclear meltdown with foreboding alarm-style sounds. Film and the horror genre obviously impact on your music, what else inspires the dark, industrial sound you push?
Movies are a major influence and always have been really, I love watching films so it made sense to me to capture moments of cinema that I enjoy in the medium I work in. Some people find it cheesy, whatever it's just my thing and I won't stop. I find the samples just increase the vibe I'm trying to create, along with the other industrial type sounds I find.

Do you tend to build tracks around the vocal samples you use or find samples that fit with something you've already put together?
I always start with the rhythm track then layer samples to fit that vibe, always trying to let the tune go in whatever direction it wants to go in. If you fight it you will struggle.

Despite the groundbreaking output of labels like Freak, Offkey's Raiden recently warned of the techno influence in D&B 'becoming its own cliche. Your new material appears to embrace this influence, with impressive results, but how do you see your sound progressing in the future?
I'm not sure to be honest. I try to write what's in my head at that time, capturing the mood I'm in. It's not something I consciously think about and neither is what I'm going to do next, I just let it happen, so that's pretty much all I can say.

What country have you most enjoyed playing in recently?
Elevate Festival 2007 in Graz, Austria with Raiden, the venue was insane - rooms carved out of the mountain, it looked like a villain's lair from a Bond film. Also, the Therapy Sessions party in Kiev, Ukraine was sick.

What do you like most about current d'n'b culture?
The ravers in Europe going nuts to the tunes week in, week out, and the other producers pushing harder-edged music.

What do you like least about current d'n'b culture?
Not being paid by certain people who should pay, they know who they are. That's about it to be honest. The thing that really let's this scene down is none payment for material...criminal.

What have you got planned for 2008?
Touring with my forthcoming LP on Tech Freak - that and more studio time. Oh, and spending much quality time with my new son, Louis.

Audio's 'To The Edge of Reason' LP is due out in early 2008. DJ Bookings: www.angeruk.net. For more info check www.myspace.com/audiouk.

Keeping It In The Family

hype & hazard

Keeping It In The Family

words: Jon Ethics pic: Leon Csernohlavek

"2007 has been the best, most enjoyable year of my whole career." This is quite a statement coming from anyone who has been at the very forefront of their profession for twenty years, but DJ Hype is a man who doesn't mess about with his words. "I've been here since before Drum & Bass, since there was no word jungle, since when there used to be one deck for fucks sake! I've followed the whole thing through but now I think it's better than ever on a global level!"

Sat in an old basement studio beneath an off license in Hackney listening to Hype and his protégé Hazard talk, you can feel the history dripping off the walls. In the next room are the remnants of Hype's old soundsystem from the early 80s, and he takes obvious glee in reminiscing over the giant old speaker cabinets and amplifiers. In stark contrast quietly stands Hazard. Still only a nipper in Birmingham when Hype was blasting out reggae with Daddy Earl and working with Shut Up & Dance in 80s Hackney, and only a teenager when Hype had become the D&B demi-god that he remains today. Unlike his mentor, Hazard is a true leader of the new school who, since signing for Hype four years ago, has unleashed massive anthems like 'Use Your Brain', 'Selector' and 'Busted' through Hype's family of labels and has become one of D&B's biggest selling artists and most in demand DJs.

Hype is obviously extremely happy with his lot right now and justly so. Never faltering from his position as one of the scene's most elite DJs, the last few years have seen the labels Hype runs with long time business partner, Pascal, blossom. New artists like Hazard, G-Dub, Prolix and Taxman have breathed fresh life and enthusiasm into not just Playaz but Hype too, as shown by his recent crowning as best DJ at 1Xtra's D&B awards.

"This year I've played to bigger audiences globally than ever in my career. When I'm playing out I find myself playing more of my own artists' music than ever before and the response to their music is bigger than ever. People can say what they want but show me a better night than Playaz at Fabric; next year will be our eighth year there. Last Friday I came out of there and thought, 'That was a wicked night' and found myself in the toilet and this guy saying to me, 'That was the best set I've ever heard you play' and I'm like…'Really?'. I can only go on the feedback I get and things like winning the 1Xtra award and even the DJ Magazine Top 100 with just me and Andy C from D&B being in there; they're good confidence boosters.

"The thing is that I'm 40 next year and the buzz for me is being at the top end of this crazy drum and bass scene. Me and Daddy Earl, we go all round the world and find ourselves in disbelief at what we're doing…I mean I played with Afrika Bambaataa in New York in September and I remember me and Earl buying 'Planet Rock' when we very first started with our soundsystem, we had a reggae sound but that was the very first record that started our transition from just reggae to electronic dance music. To say to us in 1982, 'In 2007 you two are going to be in New York DJing with Afrika Bambaataa' I'd just be like, 'Whatever, shut up!'. And we were, he was totally complementary of us and what we were doing, the crowd went for both types of music, and I'm thinking, 'This is madness'."

Hype's awe at playing alongside one of the founders and great innovators of modern electronic music is understandable to say the least and it has to be wondered whether these kind of feelings were shared by Hazard when he first signed for Hype and found himself working alongside one of the founders of drum & bass. Hype is quick to bashfully dismiss the idea: "No don't be so stupid. How can you compare me to Afrika Bambaataa?" he asks, amazed by the comparison. Hazard understands what is meant and explains: "No I think that is a case in point. I never dreamed I'd be at this stage yet. I was planning on many more years ahead working to get to the sort of stage I'm at now and being signed to you Hype that was a big, big thing man. That meant a lot to me."

Hype is, by now, obviously humbled by the comparison and flashes a tiny smile at Hazard's words. "For me to accept that would be very big headed." Hype says, "I appreciate what he says but that's my job, I help and advise Hazard and all my artists' the best way I can but at the end of the day it's their hard work that's got them there."

Four years on and Hazard's hard work has certainly repaid Hype's trust. Taking the opportunities that being associated with and supported by one of the scene's most respected names gave him, Hazard has been able to realise his ambitions and do what many can only dream of; escaping an average existence grinding out in a nine-till-five, and making music their profession and career.

"As I said I don't think I could have got this far in my career if it wasn't for Hype. I'd still be here, in D&B, but I wouldn't be as comfortable as I am now doing this as my job. He really does look after me. If there's anything I need I just ring Hype and it's there. But still he gives me the freedom to make whatever I want and is always encouraging me to be more varied with my production.

"Originally Hype thought I was signed to SS's Formation because I was doing a couple of tracks for them. When he found out I wasn't he rang me and made me an offer I really couldn't refuse so I took it. I didn't want to be signed to any labels, I didn't know what that would mean. But he made me a really nice offer and I took it. Don't get me wrong, I was still worried about my future, but the more I was with him the more I knew that was where I wanted to be. When you've got Hype in your corner, you haven't really got any problems. It's always been like that, if he doesn't agree with something he'll stand up to it, which is good for me as an artist to have someone like that there, all I need to do is concentrate on the tunes and getting to the clubs on time."

Hazard's success is not something that simply began when he signed for Hype though. From the late 90s he had built a reputation as the most popular and well known D&B DJ on the local scene in Birmingham; a status achieved through his sets around the city and his radio show on Kool FM Midlands with MCs Biggie and Accapello. From his very first tracks he rapidly progressed until his potential and talent was spotted by Hype. Hazard's story should offer faith to anyone desperate for success in their chosen field, drum & bass or not, that given enough belief and dedication anything is possible.

"I knew I'd be able to do it. In my heart I knew it was what I was going to do. Being with Playaz just boosted it and it got everything in place a lot quicker. I couldn't think of a better place to be, I love what I'm doing, I love playing in clubs. Originally I just wanted to be a DJ but then got into making music and I love that too. So for me, I've got the ideal job.

"There was a lot of luck, I was always gonna do it but I have been lucky. But some would say I made my own luck by doing certain things. I've worked in factories, done washing up in restaurants and even pizza delivery and that was all to fund buying records and equipment. I've got it all back now, I'm living nice but that wasn't ever what I was doing it for. I was doing it for the enjoyment, how many people can say they really love their job? Getting up in the morning and doing this at that time just isn't me. I need to be creative and feel I'm doing what I want to do."

Hazard was the first to be recruited to the revamped and relaunched Playaz collective at a moment in time just before Drum & Bass became besieged with the legions of new producers that the widespread availability of production software created and when it was still a very closed and insular scene. With this in mind it's natural to be intrigued by the motivations Hype had in signing Hazard.

"I liked his music, I knew he was a free agent and at that point in time I was thinking about signing acts again. I wasn't producing at the rate I used to, so I wanted to sign some acts to build the label again and it was a challenge for me. Hazard was someone who I could see had it and, bottom line, I liked his music. It's the same with any artist I sign, it's not because they make this or that sound or whatever. Like Jamal; I've just signed one of his tracks 'Splatter Patterns' which will probably come out through Ganja Tek. I approached him for that track and I said to him, 'Don't be ashamed to say it, I know I'm not your favourite kind of DJ and I know when you were making it you didn't think I'd be approaching you.' All I wanna do is put out good D&B, and after all these years of being pigeon holed, with Ganja, Jekyll & Hyde, Ganja Tek, Liqweed Ganja and Playaz there's space for all different types of sounds to exist in our camp."

With all these labels being steadily supplied with a seemingly incessant arsenal of quality music from an artist roster that is overflowing with talent, Hazard's status as Playaz biggest selling artist is quite an accolade. After a year that has seen tracks like '0121',

'Busted' and of course 'Mr Happy' (with Distorted Minds) take Hazard's fame to whole new levels and his music to undeniable appreciation across the scene, what does the future promise for the quiet man from Birmingham?

"We're talking about an album for 2009," says Hazard, "because I've got the EP coming in March with a mix CD and a tour we'll be doing to go along with that. All efforts now are going into that EP and the mix. My new tracks are really different again to tunes like 'Busted' or 'Mr Happy'. Tracks like 'Machete', 'Killaz Don't Die' and 'Cowards Beware' - all very violent titled tracks- they're big tunes that will be coming on Playaz. It's just hard to get back into the studio when you're playing out five times a week like I do sometimes."

Hazard exhibits a natural modesty as he talks softly about his music; something made all the more apparent as he talks about his love for his home city and his apathy towards the jet-setting lifestyle that his career in D&B has brought him.

"I'm never gonna leave Birmingham. Whenever I'm travelling round the world, I always just want to hurry up and get home. You know, you go to some far away place and it's all posh. It's all nice, it's all paid for, but it's not real. Some people may think 'What, Birmingham's a shit hole' but it's not, it's where I'm from, where I grew up, where I wanna be. I've got everything I need at home. Some people love going abroad and playing in all these lovely clubs but for me, you can't beat England. It's all about the motorway. I love rushing down the motorway from one club to the next, you're really in the middle of it all. When you play abroad it can feel like you park your car at the airport, get on aeroplane and then that's it, it's all in everybody else's hands. But when I'm in England that's where the fun is for me."

Having left the room to take one of the innumerable calls that constantly light up his phone, Hype re-enters the conversation to talk about Hazard's music and the big plans the Playaz camp have in store in 2008.

"Every DJ has been screaming for 'Machete' off me, but I'm holding it back a bit at the moment. I've only given it out to the very top few DJs because I don't want it to die a death. When I was first playing that track I really thought, artistically, this is Hazard's best tune. The feedback from everyone from Noisia to Brockie to Shy FX to Pendulum has been wicked It's got the Hazard stamp on it but it's definitely not another 'Busted'. Because 'Machete' and the other tracks he's working on are so good and he's had such a successful year, I really think he deserves to come up another level now. Hazard's at the stage where he's ready for it, he deserves to be at more bigger raves. He's putting in the work so he needs to get a look in. We want to move him up next year, but it will be his own hard work that will get him there. We're planning the tour now for February or March and the mix CD will tie in with the tour and EP. While that's out he's going be working on the album, because it can be the best album in the world but unless you've built up your name in certain territories then it won't get a look in. In this game rather than burst through and then disappear I think if you come in at the bottom and build gradually it's better. There's so many acts who were once the biggest thing out there and now their non-existent. We're not in a rush, as long as you're working hard you'll get there."

As Hype demonstrates his acute understanding of the machinery that drives the murky world of underground music, he shares a kind of wisdom unique to the few individuals who have been there from the very start and still stand stronger than ever today. So how does Hype feel the scene of today compares with past periods in the evolution of a movement he has seen change from acid house to hardcore to jungle to drum & bass?

"Right now I think the scene is amazing. When I travel the world, the love that drum & bass and we get is amazing. You go to New Zealand and play to 300 capacity venues for a long time and then this year you go to Christchurch and you're playing to 1,500 people. I can see the improvement, it's happening all the time and it's only getting more and more popular. At the Dour Festival in Belgium before I've even put a tune on everyone's going wild, screaming and shouting; the place is absolutely rammed out and this is in an 8,000 capacity tent! Or in LA, I flew out there to play the night after Fabric in London and suddenly I'm playing to 8,000 people in the streets of LA…I just think it's amazing. So when I hear people get negative and come with this 'D&B is dying' bullshit I think, maybe you as an artist are dying, or you the DJ aren't getting the bookings you were or maybe you the raver aren't liking the music as much as you did but it doesn't mean D&B is dying."

"You can probably dig out an interview I did for ATM 10 years ago where I'm saying exactly the same words. It's like this circle; at any one time there's one person who's getting all the love and someone else is being hated on, and then the next year the person who was getting all the love is now getting hated and so on. People saying 'It's better now it used to be shit' and people saying 'It used to be wicked, now it's shit'. I've heard people saying that shit my whole career and it's always been bollocks. Drum & bass is stronger than ever. I'm still here and Playaz is still here so I guess I'm tried and tested proof of that!"

Catch Hype on KISS FM every Wednesday from 11pm to 1am and with Hazard and the whole Playaz family at Fabric on the last Friday of every month.

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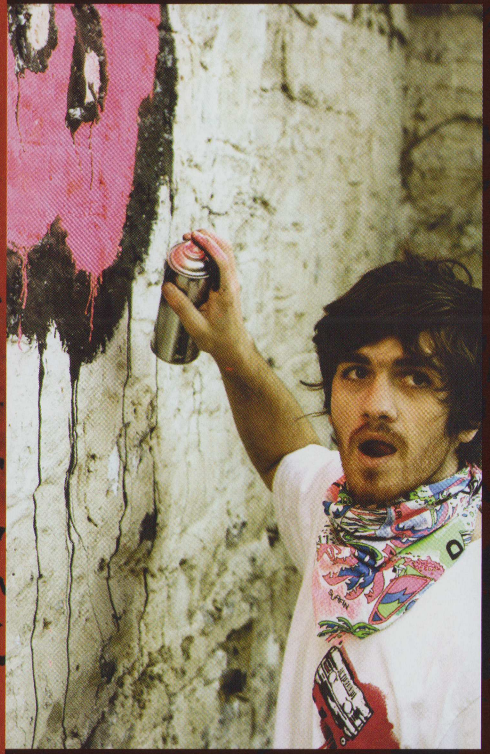
leaders of the nu skool

Compiled by: **DJ Markle, Jeryl Wilton and Mark O'Donnell.**

Seeing as it's the start of the New Year, we've decided to shake things up a bit in our Leaders section by coming up with some cunning new questions and by opening the section up beyond drum and bass to include dubstep, hip-hop, breakbeat and indeed any other music that we rate. This means there's more opportunity that ever before to stake your claim for a place in this section and you're going to find out far more than before on a selection of the hottest underground music talent around. For future shouts contact: **editor@atm-mag.com**



ALEX EVESON

Home: I'm pretty much a hobo right now. For the last few years I've been switching up between my hometown of Glastonbury, my adopted city of Bristol and the French Alps. I'm gonna be snowboarding and writing beats this winter in Morzine, before returning back to Bristol just in time for our great British summer.

What's your story? I've been into hardcore/jungle since I was an 11 year old, buying Rave Generation compilations and Fantazia tape packs and recording selections for kids in my year. I started DJing around 99 and was heavily into the darker sounds from Bad Company, Virus and Ram but also had a thing for more smoothed out beats from the likes of Good Looking, and Hospital. I was never too up on technology so didn't get down to production until late 2002 when I was in my 2nd year studying graphic design in Bournemouth. I subsequently dropped out of Uni to concentrate on music production and freelance design. Fast forward 5 years and I've produced sleeve art for Exit, Metalheadz and Quarantine, released music on Progress, Avalanche, Spearhead and Phunkfiction (including some joint efforts with Lomax) and have 12s about to drop on 31 Records, Creative Source, Future Thinkin' and Midnight Sun.

Inspirations: Visually, art nouveau (particularly Alphonse Mucha), oldschool skateboard graphics, graffiti and modern street art all have a part to play in shaping my aesthetic. Musical inspiration is drawn from my passion for all things Ninja Tune, broken beat, soulful, dubwise and jazz like in nature.

Weapon of choice: Marker pen, mechanical pencil, forum destroyer 156, hi-passed amen, 1210 mk3, Dragon Punch and being able to rock the pink without looking like a girl.

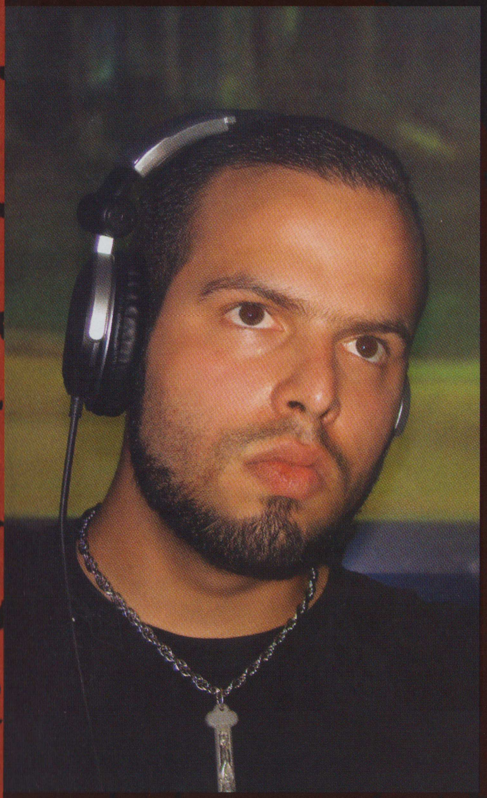
Proudest moment to date: Signing tunes to 31 and Creative Source, first few times played on Radio 1, hearing a tune of mine getting reload treatment at Swerve, landing my 1st frontside 720 mute and claiming the title of Year 7 chess champion back in the day.

What's best way to get on in life? Learning to live on a shoestring has been instrumental... all about the hustle.

What's your poison? Cider b2b double JD & coke.

What's your ideal night out? I like it random. All about finding yourself in the most bizarre situation and rolling with it.

What does the future hold? I've got my own art / music fusion label 'Channel 82' dropping through SRD, which is going to be all about building on the visual and stylistic element of the music, integrating limited edition canvas prints and clothing designs into the release schedule. Check out more at myspace.com/channel82. As for DJing I've been pretty laid back with it over the last few years, focusing more on developing myself as a producer. Now with a host of labels behind my name, a weighty arsenal of tunes, and a genuine passion for throwin' it down on the wheels of steel, it's all about establishing myself as a regular face in the dance for 2008 and beyond. Stay updated at myspace.com/evesonmusic.



ZARDONIC

Home: Barquisimeto, Venezuela.

What's your story? I'm a dedicated drum & bass producer and DJ trying to bring new horizons to the scene by merging breakbeats with sounds of my native country, Latin music, industrial sounds, and extreme metal. I have a background of black metal, trip-rock, industrial, noise, techno and death metal projects. I've always been very passionate about everything and I've greatly pursued my goals, there's still a lot to do, but things like getting my music played out by names I respect such as Counterstrike, Blu Mar Ten, Nightbreed and such, collab'ing with Identity, Mumblz, Submerged, being finally happy with the sound I'm producing after a long time of learning (and still learning!), the success of Zardonic Recordings regardless of it being a free net label, are things that tell me that I'm in the right path, and I'll keep walking up there insatiably.

Inspirations: Euphoria, Melancholy, Osho, Deepak Chopra, Dante Alighieri, Fredrik Thordendal, Chuck Schuldiner, Trey Azagthoth, Anton LaVey, Aleister Crowley, Noisia, Atari Teenage Riot, Violence, Love, Hate, Cosmos, Death, Existence, Latin Music, Ulver, Arcturus, Meshuggah, Mythology, Noise, Richard D. James, Richard Devine, Sonic Mayhem, Koji Kondo, Carl Orff, John Williams, Danny Elfman, Tim Burton, Quentin Tarantino, Oliver Stone, Jack Nicholson… (Editor: and too many more to be published here!)

Weapon of choice: For production, FL Studio. For DJing, Pioneer mixers and Denon CD players, especially the DN-S1000. Simple, yet accurate.

Proudest moment to date: Whoa, I could name many! But honestly, I think my recent signing to Ohm Resistance. Being a part of such a family makes me really proud since Submerged, Bill Laswell, Enduser and such are artists I greatly respect.

What's best way to get on in life? I think you should only try and learn from everything. No matter how negative a situation can be, you can always take something positive out of it. Negative things are necessary to build character, and character is a sign of maturity. Leave the past behind, enjoy your present and always look towards the future. Never go back, no matter how tempted you are to, because going back hurts.

What's your poison? Reggaeton, clownstep, fanatics, tyrants and sheeps.

What's your ideal night out? Spending a time in a nice, chilled out and elegant lounge, staring at my beloved one for hours and getting lost in the beauty of her eyes (whenever there's someone to love, of course) with some deep lounge background music. After that, party hard with any music I feel like playing, moving to the sounds of it. No matter what, jazz, metal, classical music, drum & bass, anything I just feel like listening to. Then, I would go to a retired place to commune with nature and rent a nice cabin to sleep. That way, I would wake up smelling fresh and pure air, smile, have a walk around and go back to reality.

What does the future hold? Apocalypse. That's where we're all going, unfortunately or not, and I'd like to think there's something that will stop it but, seeing how the world is changing, well, you figure it out by yourself. On a personal tip, nothing but success while I'm alive, and these printed words are a proof of it.

KOMONAZMUK

Home: Bristol.

What's your story? I began producing dubstep late 2005, White Boi & Headhunter heard what I was producing at the time and they said I should make some dubstep. I made a couple of tunes and it went on from there. Since then I have had a number of releases on various labels and countless remix work.

Inspirations: My music can start anywhere. I'm a freak when it comes to sounds. If I hear something, I store it an try to recreate it at home, the other day near my house these guys were erecting scaffolding and banging the steel pipes, the sound was mental. That was it, that's all I had to hear. I went in the studio to make something like that.

Weapon of choice: Logic Pro. I have lots of other plug ins and hardware but for me I can create anything with Logic that can be done with any synth or FX. Logics Native plug ins are perfect.

Proudest moment to date: Starting my record label, Mode Recordings. Mode is on its 5th release and has made a great impact on the scene. We had to repress Mode 001 two days after release; this set us off for a great year.

What's best way to get on in life? WTF? Well I can say don't waste time doing things that don't need to be done.

What's your poison? Anything with a percentage.

What's your ideal night out? I like to go out with the lads, sink some beers and skank out to some heavy bass… this can last upto three days.

What does the future hold? At the moment my DJ appearances are taking up a lot of my time, so my production rate has slowed down some what. 2008 will see lots of quality releases from myself and the Mode camp. I will be looking to start an album in the summer of 2008, which will be followed by a new live act I'm getting together.

EDDIE K

Home: Bristol.

What's your story? I got involved in drum & bass in what seems to be the path that most producers take. Started going to raves, buying tape packs then got my first set of decks when I was about 15. After a few years of DJing I decided I wanted to have a go at producing, got hold of some software and was from that day completely hooked. I was very lucky because at the time I started producing I was driving DJ Fresh to all his UK gigs so I would play him my music in the car and get really good tips and ideas off him. The next good break I got was when I was introduced to local Bristol boys Distorted Minds. I was constantly giving them CDs of tunes and ideas I was working on and then in April 2007 they offered me a 3 year publishing and recording contract with D-Style. Since then I've been hard at work making music to follow up my first single 'Stinkbox'/'My Sound', which is out on D-Styles sister label Stereotype now.

Inspirations: I take my inspiration from all over but within D&B I'd have to say producers such as Hazard, D Minds and the older Twisted Individual stuff are what really inspired me to start making music. People have different takes on the music but when I go out I like to hear music with energy and a good vibe.

Weapon of choice: Virus Ti. Best money I've ever spent!

Proudest moment to date: When Gerard at D-Style put the record contract in front of me.

What's best way to get on in life? Stay single!

What's your poison? JD and coke or whatever is put in front of me!

What's your ideal night out? Tuesday night at Run (D-Styles night)… oh, and Wednesday off work!

What does the future hold? Keep doing what I'm doing, making lots of music, playing lots of gigs and enjoying life! My next single is out early 2008 so keeps your eyes peeled. To hear my music or book me check www.dstyle.co.uk there is a MySpace link in there too!

MC FOKUS

Home: Hitchin, Hertfordshire.

What's your story? I first got into drum and bass music in 1997, and over the years have progressed through the ranks of various UK pirate radio stations and promotions onto the international D&B circuit. During that time I've developed an individual rhyming style and have placed a lot of emphasis on my lyrical content, which I feel sets me apart from a lot of the other MCs in the scene.

Inspirations: Stevie Hyper was the first MC that I ever heard chat and it was his energy that originally inspired me to pick up a microphone. A few years down the line I discovered Conrad and DRS on a Progression Sessions CD, and both of those guys had a big impact on me, and made me appreciate the deeper and more lyrical aspect of being a drum and bass MC. In more recent times I would cite MC System and MC Rage as big influences.

Weapon of choice: Shure SM58 Beta – the essential mic for performing in a club (combined with a sharp lyrical mind!)

Proudest moment to date: One of the most prominent in my mind is taking over the mic from MC moose after him and DJ Storm had just played the midnight set at Traffic on New Years Eve 2005, it was a good feeling coming on stage after two of the scenes true veterans had torn the place down.

What's best way to get on in life? Stick to your guns and don't watch what anybody else is doing, just concentrate on getting to where you want to go. And try and make some friends along the way!

What's your poison? Let's just say I have a love/hate relationship with Mr Smirnoff…

What's your ideal night out? Getting dressed up smart with some good friends and going out in a city that we haven't been to before, and checking out exactly what it has to offer…

What does the future hold? I'm concentrating on building my profile and getting my name out there. I'm currently working on studio projects with Skitty, and with MC System who I'm collaborating with on some non-d'n'b based tracks. I'm also working closely with the Swiss DJ / production unit Lost Sequence. 2008 is set to be a good year.

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ES9
The Tokyo Connection

words: Mark OD pics: Zen Inoya

ES9 are a three-man crew based in Tokyo, Japan. Comprising of Japan's best known DJ Aki, Yuuki and Takeo, they run the 06S drum and bass event and the leading nightclub in Japan (Womb), they have a record label (06S Records), they've made tracks with Sonic ('Accelerator' and 'Intersteller Odyssey' and they're friends with many of the leading drum and bass heads worldwide, including D Bridge, Marky, Ram Records and Futurebound. ATM caught up with them on Brick Lane, E1, while they were in the UK playing at The End, Chibuku and Swerve.

When did you originally hook up?
Yuuki: About ten years ago, Aki & Takeo used to live in New York and I used to live in London. We never really knew each other in Tokyo, but we hooked up through drum and bass. We had Japanese international drum and bass links, so they used to come to London and I used to go New York. In about 1998, we all decided to come back to Tokyo. There weren't many international DJs playing at that time, so we decided to form a team of DJing, making music, parties and from last year, 06S Records. We brought the spirit back from New York and London to Tokyo.

What drum and bass first inspired you?
Aki: Aphrodite, 'Bomber' and Origin Unknown, 'Valley Of The Shadows'.

Yuuki: In the first phase I was always down at Swerve. That's how I got recognition from Fabio, every week he'd see this crazy Japanese dude dancing next to him. We also had a really big encounter with Bad Company back in the day, Vegas used to live in Japan when he was 16, before Bad Company. I happened to hook up with him then he turned out to be part of BC. He introduced us to D Bridge – he has always been our biggest supporter in the UK, as well as a good friend. Every year we go down to Brazil to see Marky & Patife, who have come from a similar background to us, being from outside of the UK, it was hard to break through to the UK scene.

Tell us about Tokyo and Japan?
Aki: We've been running parties for 6 years. At the beginning they were much smaller.

Yukki: When we started people were saying drum and bass is dead!

Aki: Now drum and bass parties take place in Osaka, Hiroshima and many other cities, 6 years ago I couldn't imagine it. There's also many producers, it's very good.

Was there a turning point for D&B in Japan?
Takeo: I think since Aki's mix CD came out in 2003.

How does Womb compare with big UK clubs like The End?
Yuuki: That's a tough question, as Womb has become world renowned, its nothing like Fabric or The End but when people from the UK come to Womb, it's a big deal. Similarly, The End has always been the Mecca for us and Fabric always has strong line-ups. Now that Aki has played The End (Ram Records night) that was a great experience, being in the temple of drum and bass.

How do you find the food in the UK?
Aki: Ha-ha, it's so expensive!

Yuuki: It's not good.

When the three of you perform as ES9, how do you go about the live performance?
Takeo: We do a live set, laptops, audio-visual together.

Yuuki: I MC on the live set.

Takeo: I run the movie and sounds; we use Ableton Live and Motion Live for visuals.

Yuuki: We make certain visuals for our tunes, with live performance elements and the visual and sounds are synchronised.

Takeo: In Japan we grew up with all the toys and technology, basically technology is the local thing. We like technology and drum and bass so we put them together.

Yuuki: If we do our live show its going to cost a lot but at Womb its all there.

Takeo: We've been talking to programmers at software companies, like Roland, we tell them what we need for visual synthesisers and they develop.

Let's talk about your record label. What is the idea behind 06S Records?
Aki: We've had three releases, the latest one has D Bridge and Futurebound remixes. We distribute vinyl and MP3 through ST Holdings.

Yuuki: It's so important to go in studio with other producers when we bring other DJs over.

Aki: We recently made a tune with Cleveland Watkiss when he was in Japan.

Yuuki: Launching the label has influenced some of the youngsters to come up with something, when we have time we will bring in top producers as well. We don't need to put loads of releases out, it's for us and those who collaborate with us, it's quite simple.

Takeo: 06S has a community. If our friends come to our parties and if people love the tune, we will release the tune. We use Mixi (like the Japanese MySpace) as part of promotion. Womb has strong fanbase, we distribute a free paper, and we have podcast. The media from Womb, we invented it.

Yuuki: In Japan it's difficult to tell people through magazines, radio or TV. Over the years having a strong venue and party has changed things.

Takeo: This year we started a drum and bass radio show on Japanese digital radio.

You are close friends with people like D Bridge, how important are relationships like this?
Yuuki: He made us, he backed us up, we feel he's one of us; he's a top guy and wants to learn more about the (Japanese) culture. He has certain elements that could work and be successful in Japan so if he decides to move we will help and back him up.

Any DJ that has been to Japan to experience playing at Womb has always come back raving about the venue, the people and the culture. With their contacts stretching across the UK to NYC to Brazil and back, ES9 are part of the global drum and bass network that continues to promote the cause through club nights, music, radio, media and word of mouth. If you're ever in Japan be sure to check out the guys down at Womb, you're sure to receive a warm welcome.

www.womb.jp
www.myspace.com/yuuki01
www.myspace.com/takeo_es9
www.myspace.com/djaki_es9

leaders of the nu skool

MARTYN

Home: Washington DC / Rotterdam / Eindhoven.

What's your story? Been DJing since 1995, producing music for almost 4 years now, started with drum 'n' bass but since I've always had a real widespread taste, I found myself making 'Martyn music' at all sorts of tempos. After a few 12" on drum n bass labels such as Revolver, Bassbin, Play:Musik and dubstep on Tempa, Hessle Audio and Applepips, my first record on my own imprint is in stores now: 'Velvet' and 'Twenty Four', name of the label is 3024.

Inspirations: Anyone who's been doing what they believe in musically regardless of genres, styles, or the "sound of the week". Marcus Intalex, Kode9, Goldie, Ricardo Villalobos, Carl Craig, Mala and DMZ, Calibre, D-Bridge, Jonny L and Jackmate.

Weapon of choice: Turntables, 2 computers, a motu soundcard, coffee machine, a passport, a DVD of Blade Runner.

Proudest moment to date: When people who I have always found incredibly inspiring, even before I was making my own music, are playing and loving what you do. It's a great inspiration. Also, every gig I play is special in one way or another, and it makes me proud to see people dance to my music.

What's best way to get on in life? With lots of coffee, Dr Pepper, love and devoting your life to music.

What's your poison? See above!

What's your ideal night out? My ideal night would have Kode9, D-Bridge, Luciano, Ricardo Villalobos and Mala, a great vibe, in a small intimate club, going on 'til the early morning, thank you very much. :)

What does the future hold? More releases on 3024, a few interesting remixes, my experiments with live-sets, a start on an album!

RESO

Home: Morden.

What's your story? I'm a dubstep producer / DJ and I work for Z-Audio Distribution. Started making tunes about 4 years ago after getting a rubbish PC but I've played drums for about 15 years.

Inspirations: That feeling you get when you've smoked too many snouts. Other than that loads of funk / jazz / metal / d'n'b / ambient / IDM, whatever!

Weapon of choice: '2faced Rasta' (reso remix).

Proudest moment to date: The first time and everytime I hear one of my beats played out in a club, it's a good feeling.

What's best way to get on in life? Eating Asda value mince and smoking far too much, also being broke all the time does wonders for your general well being.

What's your poison? Guinness.

What's your ideal night out? Start off with a kebab on the green lanes (Harringay N4) followed by a swift 2-3 pints in the Beaconsfield (local). Grab 2 Dragon Stout for the tube journey to Central London, at which point head for night of dubstep / d'n'b / jazz / funk / minimal, proceed to get more wankered off over-priced shit beer and catch the nightbus home avoiding crackpots throwing sweets or singing Blues Brothers tunes. Actually just meeting mates for a few beers and chatting nonsense is good enough for me these days.

What does the future hold? For me I'm gonna be making an album and just doing as many gigs as possible. For humanity, the presently dormant snake people will awaken from their 10,000 year deep kip to enslave modern man and put them in forced labour camps making knock off Air 90s for the geezer in Finsbury Park to shot on road to impressionable snakemen youts. Probably.

TRG

Home: Bucharest, Romania (for the time being…)

What's your story? Sit down, pass the popcorn! It all started one hot July morning in '81… Well not really… I guess it all started around 2005 when I got into dubstep via grime, having originally been into 2-step and drum and bass later on. I started making beats around 2002 but with dubstep I really felt it was going somewhere, and when Hessle Audio 001 came about, I knew this was the sound I should elaborate on. I like to party so I make party beats, at the same time I like post-rave Sundays and I make post-rave soundscapes so I guess my story is like a big weekend: rave on Saturday, suffer on Sunday. I'm so serious!

Inspirations: I listen to fairly different music so my inspiration range from Basic Channel, Rhythm & Sound, Metalheadz, Groove Chronicles, El-B, dirty techno, Ravel, Debussy, Stravinski, '94 era hip hop, Sandra, Sabrina…

Weapon of choice: When I play out and things get just a little too ghetto, I a) imagine myself sporting a glock, or b) play Cajmere – 'Percolator' and either clear the floor or bring sexy back!

Proudest moment to date: Hearing Mary Anne Hobbs say my name on Radio One was a bit too much for me to handle. I'm that sensitive!

What's best way to get on in life? Chill out, relax, have fun, meet people, be friendly, creative, work out, eat healthy. Which is the exact opposite of how I get on in life.

What's your poison? Jaegermeister in a chilled glass. Or more glasses, depending on the occasion. Whoever invented the wake-up call in hotels, my hat is off to you.

What's your ideal night out? I rarely go out to gaze at my trainers with my hood up…I like sexy vibes, I like it when people brock out and stop caring. My ideal night out involves subs, sweat, whistles, rewinds, heat, smoke, sexy music. I know I've had a good night out when I wake up the day after and ache for toasties, neurofen and visine. Right now it's a combination of dubstep and bassline house.

What does the future hold? Hopefully a pristine clean environment, an equitable distribution of wealth on each of Earth's colonies, Cubase SX3030, free robot love, immortality and the final absence of television, politics and the smoking ban. However, I believe the future will resemble the bleak dystopias we all fear and create tracks about, when urban warfare, bio-terrorism, hunger, magnetic megastorms and euro-trance will rule the world. But that's like, so next millennium, what do I care?!

DEAD-O (CLOUDS)

Home: Helsinki.

What's your story? A pretty long one, but basically, I started DJing hip-hop in the early 90s, and ended up listening to a pretty wide range of music. I've always loved deep, hefty basslines though, so dubstep was a pretty obvious choice.

Inspirations: Underground hip-hop on tape, reggae and dub business, anti-folk ... analogue bits, 4-tracks, whatever.

Weapon of choice: Jeffrey Lewis – Back when I was 4.

Proudest moment to date: When mala asked me to play at dmz.

What's best way to get on in life? Not worrying about the negativity, just keeping your head up. You've gotta work hard to go places, but a bit of belief in yourself (and a dream) never goes astray.

What's your poison? Karhu (the best beer there is), coffee, all six seasons of Family Guy... pick one!

What's your ideal night out? Good tunes, good mates, and a huge sound system.

What does the future hold? For a start, we'll all be dead. Beyond that…?

LENZMAN

Home: Leiden, The Netherlands, although I spend a lot of time in the UK these days - mainly the South West of England.

What's your story? I was born... grew up... made some beats... signed some 12's on Future Retro, Phuzion and Spearhead. And here I am a half a producer / DJ.

Inspirations: In drum & bass mainly Bukem, Fabio, Calibre, Carlito & Addiction, DJ Die. But outside the list could go on forever: Jay Dee, Isaac Hayes, David Lynch, Jimi Hendrix, Jazzanova, 9th Wonder, DJ Premier, Pete Rock, Mohammed Ali, my emotions, Minnie Ripperton, Akira Kurosawa, travelling around the world, Ahmad Jamal, Kanye West, Curtis Mayfield, Nelson Mandela, André Hazes and Tony Soprano!

Weapon of choice: Uhhhh... my banjo.

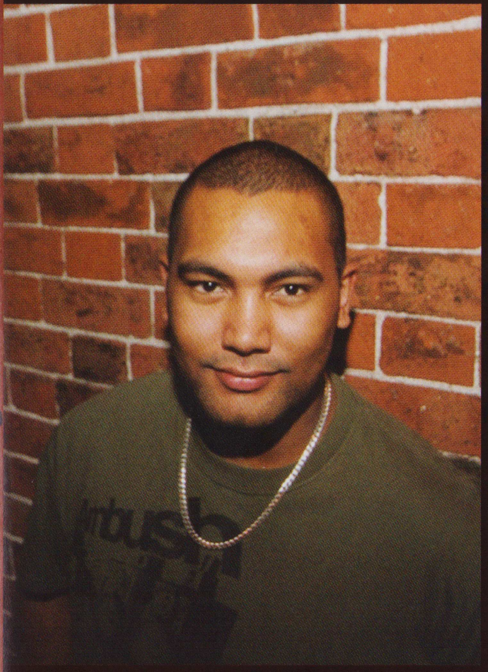
Proudest moment to date: Hard to say. To be honest the last year I've had a few moments that felt pretty amazing to me. From my heroes of yesteryears – Fabio & LTJ Bukem - playing my music, to my music getting released, to Nu:Tone remixing one of my songs – to playing at a Progression Sessions night in Fabric.

What's best way to get on in life? I don't want to sound like a hippy, but: treat others as you wish to be treated and follow your heart.

What's your poison? Lots of water, lots of black coffee and lots of Mojitos!

What's your ideal night out? A small but classy venue, good music, good friends, and LOTS of Mojitos!

What does the future hold? As I mentioned before Nu:Tone's just done a sick remix of my tune 'Caught Up' which is due out late January as the sampler for the Spearhead album project 'Moodswings'. For the 'Moodswings' CD I've done a remix of BCee & Lomax's 'Can't Say No'. I've done two tracks with Submorphics ('Respiration' and 'Way Back When'), both of which are forthcoming early 2008 as a 12" on Phunkfiction. Later in 2008 there will be another Lenzman 12" on Spearhead and there's a few more bits and pieces that might be getting snapped up, but I can't say anything definite about them right now. Other than that there are a few collaborations in the works with people like Furney, Lynx and Brother and of course there are plenty of fresh Lenzman bits on their way.



STANZA

Home: Birmingham.

What's your story? I got into DJing after seeing a turntablism demo at a youth centre, so I spent my birthday money on some second hand belt drive decks. For a few years I was spinning UKG and hip hop at house parties and college parties. Then my older sister Zoe, who at the time worked in a record shop, started bringing d'n'b home which I didn't like at first but then a few tracks really stood out (e.g. Concord Dawn – 'Morning Light') and that got me into D&B. I moved to Bristol for Uni and managed to blag a few sets in return for flyering and luckily some local promoters picked up on what I was doing. It's all expanded from there really. A few residencies and competition wins later and I'm now back in Birmingham and lucky enough to have regular booking across the UK and occasionally beyond. I'm also producing at the moment which is starting to progress, slowly but surely with a few releases due next year.

Inspirations: As a DJ I like to think I'm not really influenced by other d'n'b DJs and just do my own thing playing what I like and how I like. But certainly in the beginning I was influenced by DJ EZ and how no-one in his scene was even close to his level of skill. I suppose I try and transpose that to d'n'b by differentiating myself from other DJs through unique mixing and selection.

Weapon of choice: At the moment it's either 'Artisan VIP' by Lomax, or 'Shining' by Dillinja.

Proudest moment to date: As a DJ, winning three DJ competitions in the last year. Innovation In The Sun / Random Concept, which was judged by Friction. Drum & Bass Arena's 11th Birthday DJ Competition, and finally the Bedlam / Valve DJ Competition. As a new producer, having my track 'The Regal Club' played on 1xtra and London Elektricity's Hospital Records Podcast.

What's best way to get on in life? In the day I work a 9-5 for an outsourcing company, and I spend my evenings cruising on the net b2b working on beats. My weekends are mostly spent on the motorway, occasionally stopping off for a spot of DJing.

What's your poison? Red Bull.

What's your ideal night out? A road-trip to an obscure part of the country to play a set, then ending up back in a less obscure part of the country at some house party until sunrise.

What does the future hold? My first release on Scheme's Bounce sister label Deep. Look out for 'The Regal Club' and 'Kanashibari'. There should also be collaboration with Lomax, and some mix CD projects with my partner in crime MC Carasel.

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THE DOWNLOAD DEBATE

Like it or not, the online music revolution has rendered digital downloads as a definite fixture of the music industry. A new generation of music lovers wake up in a world where going online and buying a digital tune has replaced going to town and buying a CD or vinyl. Only a few years ago virtually no record labels, major or minor, took digital downloads seriously. It's a different world now.

To this day digital downloads are an intimidating factor to many different elements in the music industry including labels, producers, record shops and hard-format music distributors. This needn't be the case. If properly utilised, the new digital mobility of music is a blessing for music, for music lovers and for the people who create it.

The invention of Mpeg (layer 2) encoding by an EU funded team, originally tasked to research DAB Radio (project EUREKA) has had its dark sides. From 1991 until 1995, MP2 was developed into MP3 by a team led by K. Brandenburg and remained completely unknown (and virtually useless) to the general public. After 1995, MP3s hit cyberspace and all hell was brought loose in the form of Napster, the first peer-2-peer music-sharing site.

Although the Internet Underground Music Archive created a site based on hosting MP2 files in 1993, it wasn't until 1995, with the arrival of the MP3 and 1999, with the arrival of Napster that the digital downloading of tracks (illegally) became widespread. Napster utilised people's ability to encode tracks at home with a peer-2-peer network to create a big ball of trouble. Users freaked out at the opportunity to own every track they could imagine, for free and with the simple click of a button. The industry attempting to sell these tracks freaked out too!

The lawsuits were heaped on Napster and eventually on its users and although peer-2-peer sites still operate today a new and legal alternative was as inevitable as the pirates it followed. Some bright spark saw an Apple shaped hole in the market and in 2001 iTunes, the legitimate equivalent to Napster, was born.

The only way to out fox the pirating networks was with sound quality. Digital retailers relied on providing the listener with hi-bitrate MP3s, WAV files and unique formats to undermine the low-quality files found on P2P networks. Large files are currently too unwieldy to be practical for P2P networks.

Currently the legitimate digital market is flourishing faster than anyone expected. It seems that the public would prefer to pay a small price for a track than wait to find it on a free network. As well as enhanced sound quality, legitimate digital downloads provide instant access to the track of your choice including the artwork and at the listeners command. There's no need to install a spyware-ridden program with which to download the tracks, ensuring the health of a PC or Mac.

Beatport, a site specialising in dance music, have provided digital downloads for four years and have seen rapid growth as more and more labels are signed up and more content is made available on the site. I spoke to label rep Dan Cole about Beatport and about digi-downloads in general. Beatport started in the States with a focus on minimal techno and tech-house. Never wanting to be pigeonholed, Beatport now strive to cover all dance genres and have made big steps in 2007 most notably with the inclusion of dubstep.

Dubstep is a good genre for pointing out the pros and cons of digi-downloads because of a general reluctance to embrace the digital market by certain key labels and stables. Neither Tempa or Dmz (two leading labels) have allowed anyone to sell their tracks as digital downloads and have made no moves to provide the service themselves. Dan has found them virtually unbudgeable. Due to dubstep being such a clinically well-sculpted sound it suffers from the lack of analogue warmth when played on a cd.

There are other concerns as well, labels that are used to self-financing and even self-distributing feel like placing full quality digital tracks online is losing control of their product. It's very rare now (and expensive) for anyone to pirate a vinyl release by illegally reproducing the vinyl but with MP3s it's a whole different story. Once an MP3 is available for download the jump from legitimate site to P2P network is too short for some labels and producers to stomach. Currently, the most buccaneer of the pirate sites are ones like mp3skyline.com. Using complex and internationally criminal Russian copyright law this site has been able to accumulate over 20,000 gigs of unlicensed MP3s which are sold on for the scandalously low price of 20 cents (USD) per track.

In relation to dubstep, the releases which have appeared on the site have been ripped from vinyl promos, most likely acquired in the UK and shared on invite only P2P networks like the former site Oink. This proves that whilst piracy is still a major factor online, keeping releases on vinyl can actually increase the chance of bootlegging due to the tracks exclusive nature. Another danger Dan pointed out was the risk of vinyl distributors suddenly going bust and in turn bankrupting the label. If the revenue streams are spread between hard and soft format distributors the label is more likely to absorb the financial loss incurred when a company goes bust.

The advantages of the online music revolution are immense. Beatport proves that large and stable companies can be built on niche genres and music largely sourced from independent rather than major labels. Dan has noticed a growing trend of labels being run by the producers themselves due to the fact that running a digital label has much less workload and financial investment required when compared to a vinyl label. This will avoid the exploitation of artists by labels so prevalent in the early jungle and d'n'b scene. The formation of a digital download industry has ensured the future of record labels, empowered the independent producer with a quality product to market their own music, without first needing the backing of a label or marketing company.

The music industry is in the middle of a massive transitional phase in relation to the online market. From a tracks birth in the studio to its coming of age at the dance it may never leave a computer. This provides an ultra fast route for music to travel down which can only lead to more music, more genres and more people involved in the industry.

BLACK SUN EMPIRE

For those of you who just skim the surface of the D&B pool, you may be surprised to learn that a trio of Dutch producers with a completely uncompromising approach to their music are actually some of the most commercially viable artists in the scene. So how exactly do Rene, Micha and Milan manage to balance so correctly the business of selling records in a way that doesn't encroach upon their artistic vision? Well that's what we're here to find out…

THE STUDIO

Our studio is based in Utrecht, The Netherlands, in a rented basement. There are two rooms, both of which are set up for producing. In the main room we also have a setup to do all the business stuff that makes up a relatively big part of our everyday lives as we run two labels, regular nights called 'Blackout' in two different clubs and our DJ schedule requires a lot of communication with our booking agent too.

The studio itself, as with most D&B artists, isn't a recording studio in the traditional sense. It's not really suitable for recording anything but the most basic things like a simple vocal, but actual recording isn't really a big part of how we make music. The main studio equipment is based around a powerful PC (with a RME HDSP 9652 soundcard) running Cubase 4, two sets of speakers (Adam P22a's, Adam Subwoofer and old trusted Genelec 1031's) and we use a bunch of hardware sound sources as well as a whole host of VST plug ins. Hardware wise we have two Nord Modulars (generation 1 and 2) a Waldorf Pulse, and two keyboards; a Dave Smith Evolver and an Access Virus KC.

The second studio also has a mini set up with a PC, Dynaudio BM6A monitors, a Korg Z1 synth, an SPL Volume 2, an RME HDSP 9632 Soundcard and a nice DJ setup with 1 Technics SL1200, 2 Pioneer CDJ1000's and a Pioneer DM500 Mixer. We also have a couch, a near perfect coffee maker and fast wireless internet…what more could you need?

HARDWARE VS SOFTWARE

Moving onto how we actually approach making music, well the first thing that you'll probably have already noticed is that we like to use a mixture of hardware and software. Most people these days just use plug ins because they're cheap and easy to use, and that's fine, but we don't think you can replace the synths we have, we want to get even more analogue gear because the sound quality is still so amazing! We love modular designs so we're crazy about the Nords, if someone combined a plug in with real analogue oscillators and filters we'd use them all the time!

Away from analogue and entering the digital realm, our favourite soft synth is Minimonsta by G-Media, it's been in all of our tracks recently! It sounds good and every parameter can be controlled by LFOs and envelopes which gives you a massive amount of control. Another great one is Dimension Pro by Cakewalk. It's basically a collection of instrument presets that we use to get ideas down quickly. Kontakt by Native Instruments is our sampler as we love the kind of modular approach to sampling; you can keep adding LFOs and such to make sounds seem more alive.

TECHNIQUE

Rather unfortunately for giving out tips and tricks, we tend to vary our production techniques all the time and we will never approach making the next tune in the same way that we did the last one. However, there are some things which stay constant; we always use lots of compression for example. We will use over 30 different compressors on various tracks, some with really extreme settings to completely change a sound and others just to even things out a touch. There's not secret to it, each sound will need different settings and, as always, it's best to trust your ears. As an example, our beats will be broken down into lots of multiple drum hits and each one will have its own compression and then we will have a bus with another compressor to give body to the overall mix. Sometimes we will also send that onto another bus with a gate, another compressor and an EQ to emphasize the attack of the whole beat and give it a bit more punch.

There is another technique that is really popular at the moment, called side chaining. A lot of producers will use this to make their beats sound stronger or to pull down elements of the track to let other sounds come through, we will sometimes use it too but to be honest we tend to prefer a nice clean sound where each individual part gets its own space in the frequency range. We think you can get a cleaner sound without side chaining.

CONQUERING APATHY

Sometimes, as every artist knows, it can be difficult to maintain focus when writing a tune and listening to the same thing over and over. When the dreaded apathy strikes we'll sometimes try to force our way out of it by playing around with new techniques or just mangling up sounds, sometimes we will concentrate on some other business stuff for a while, organising the nights or designing the artwork for our releases, but if we're really stuck then we will load up something else and give that a bash. We usually have about 5-10 tracks on the go at any one time and we have a few non D&B tunes on the go in case we need a complete change. We find that mixing it up a bit helps and that's the best tip we can give you really, keep things interesting and persevere with making music at all cost, it's the best way to succeed.

www.myspace.com/blacksunempire

Contact: Nookie@atm-mag.com

Welcome to another **TECH SUPPORT!** This is the one and only place to find my personal selection of DJ and music production kit for your studio. In this issue we feature the latest instalment of the digital live DJ with M-Audio's Torq, get down and dirty with Spectasonics Retro Funk drum expander for Stylus, hit the South Coast with Aquasky's sample DVD, we check out 2 of the finest software instruments in Cakewalk's Dimension Pro and Native Instruments Electronic Instruments 2XT, and fire up the latest Firewire external soundcard from Tascam. And of course we check out my personal selection of FREE plug-ins…

torq
conectiv

M-AUDIO
Torq Conectiv

The latest addition to the ever increasing war on live digital DJ hardware modules! Pitting itself against the excellent Serato Scratch, Traktor Scratch and the great Virtual Vinyl from Numark.

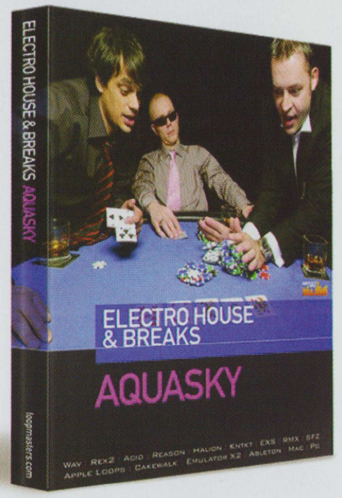
Torq Conectiv includes the Torq DJ software and Conectiv bus-powered 4 x 4 USB audio interface designed for DJs who perform and produce tracks with a laptop. Torq Conectiv delivers high-fidelity audio, (including dual phono preamps). Torq supports all the popular file formats such as MP3, WAV, WMA and AAC files and is configured to automatically work with Conectiv right out of the box. And unlike some digital DJ systems, the Conectiv interface works with other third-party software.

Torq includes an integrated two-channel mixer with three-band EQs, level controls, headphone cueing and a crossfader, just like a traditional DJ setup. The program has two virtual decks where you can load, cue and mix digital files, it will even automatically beat-match the files the instant you load them. Torq also organises all of your digital files into an easily searchable database, letting you pull up the required track in an instant. The Conectiv USB interface also includes two pairs of RCA stereo inputs and outputs, microphone input and phono preamps. Two large knobs allow you to mix between the incoming audio from a turntable or CD player and the output to a connected Mac or PC.

Torq supports the vast world of third-party VST effects plug-ins and allows you to create recallable snapshots of your favourite EQ, effect and mixer settings. You also get 10 built-in effects right out of the box. The program also includes a 16 cell tempo-synced sampler so you can add different effects over your mix,

Price: around £160

For more information please visit:
www.m-audio.com



LOOPMASTERS
Artist Series: Aquasky

Loopmasters start off their artist sample DVD series with one of the scene's longest serving members…Bournemouth's local heroes, Aquasky!

Aquasky started life as a drum and bass production outfit in the 90s with many releases on the likes of Moving Shadow Records and their own Passenger imprint, and in more recent years have become known for their awesome basslines and electro breaks productions. Well known and respected for their production style and particularly the cone melting basslines that form the signature of many of their tunes, Aquasky have looked deep into their production archive to bring you an exhaustive palette of inspiring samples for anyone looking to make electro, breaks or house.

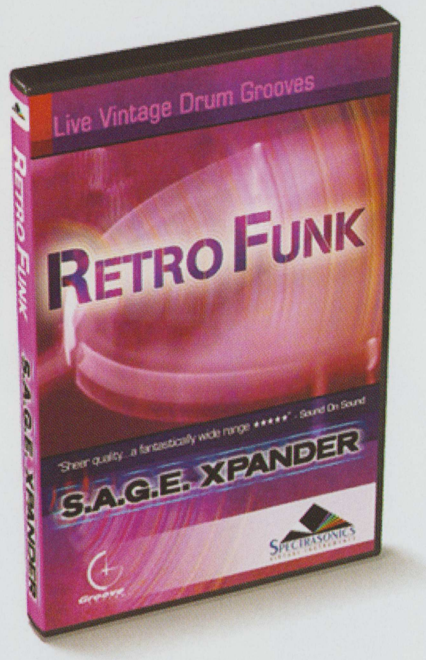
Whether you are looking for tearing breakbeats, minimal 4/4 beats, full flavoured drum kit samples, heavy bass samples, or inspiring musical loops, filters and chords – you will find a truly unique and highly useable set of royalty free electro house and breaks samples contained in this package.

Featuring over 1.5GB of material, the package includes over 190 breakbeats and electro house drumloops, 15 drum fills, 53 twisted bass loops, 167 inspirational music loops, and over 150 vocal samples from the Ragga Twins and Bex. Also included are over 300 heavyweight drum kit samples, 187 bass single hits, 55 FX hits, 15 FX loops and more than 200 instrument sounds. You also get a full remix pack for their latest 'Have a Good Time' release which includes 4 drum loops, 1 FX loop, 3 bass loops and 2 bass multisamples.

Overall an excellent array of dynamic sounding samples from Aquasky and Loopmasters.

Price: around £30

For more information please visit:
www.loopmasters.com



SPECTRASONICS
Retro Funk Expander

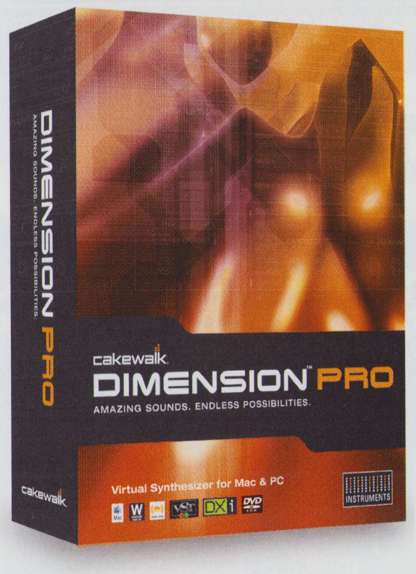
The Spectrasonics Retro Funk Expander is a collection of live drum, vintage grooves and loops, used within the highly acclaimed Stylus RMX. This is an excellent collection of Intros, Fills, Fill Bars, Breakdowns and separate Claps, Cymbals and live percussion loops. The featured players include: Gregg Bissonette (Santana, Joe Satriani, Don Henley), Bob Wilson (Liquid Grooves, George Benson, The Crusaders), John Ferraro (Larry Carlton, David Benoit, Albert Lee, Aaron Neville), Eric Boseman (Liquid Grooves, James Newton-Howard).

The sound quality is nice and clean and comes dry enabling you to add you own effects, with the quantization of the loops and sounds being very authentic and vintage and not too 'digital' giving you a warm 'live' feel. As with all the sounds generated within Stylus RMX you can adjust the tempo in your host sequencer package making the loops fit perfectly into your production, with midi arrangements made easily available to export by drag and drop.

Retro Expander also comes with a special bonus section including grooves from Bizarre Guitar, Vocal Planet, Distorted Reality and more just to tease you!

Price: around £40

For more information please visit:
www.spectrasonics.net



CAKEWALK
Dimension Pro

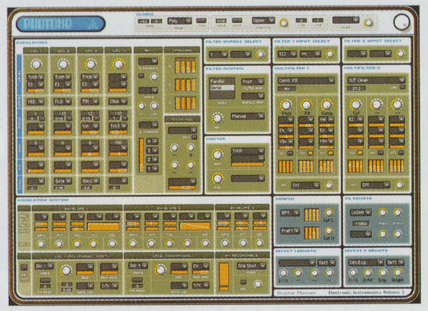
Cakewalk Dimension Pro is the critically-acclaimed soft synth that combines real instruments with advanced synthesis, giving you endless sound possibilities. The two DVD sound library that ships with Dimension Pro includes over 1500 production-ready presets. Dimension Pro features a powerful pairing of sample-playback and advanced synthesis technologies giving you 'straight-out-the-box' sounds and some deep editing functions for all the sound designer geeks out there!

Dimension Pro's 7GB library includes various bass, grand piano, electric guitar, drum kits, a full orchestral suite and instruments from around the world. The massive library also explores the worlds of techno, trance and electronica, providing a collection of synth leads, electronic bass', lush pads and atmospheric FX.

This soft synth is extremely user-friendly and very easy on the CPU power, even when some of the presets are over 100mb in size! Also, as an added bonus free expansion packs are available as downloads to registered Rapture customers from the Cakewalk website.

Price: from £140

For more information please visit:
www.cakewalk.com



NATIVE INSTRUMENTS
Electronic Instruments 2 XT

The Native Instruments Electronic Instruments 2 XT is an exclusive collection of instruments that take full advantage of REAKTOR's advanced engine technology but run completely independently.

The instruments can be used both stand-alone or as plug-ins, and offers you complete freedom to innovate, experiment and express. Some of the world's leading instrument designers have helped produce Native Instruments Electronic Instruments 2 XT, providing 8 ground-breaking synthesizers, drum machines and effects. This bargain priced plug-in gives you the potential of REAKTOR regardless of whether you own REAKTOR. Whilst these instruments are based on the REAKTOR engine, they are fully-fledged instruments in their own right and run as independent programs. Naturally, they can also be loaded as ensembles into REAKTOR 4 or REAKTOR SESSION.

Electronic Instruments 2 XT comes equipped with a wealth of presets created by renowned artists including: Photek, BT, Junkie XL, Speedy J, Richard Devine, Jam & Spoon, Machinehead, Richard Davis, Jam El Mar, Telefon Tel Aviv, Exile and others.

Price: around £40

For more information please visit:
www.native-instruments.com

TASCAM
Fire One

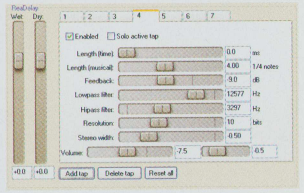
The Tascam FireOne is a FireWire Audio Interface with shortcut keys and a weighted, illuminated jog wheel. The FireOne is a stereo audio interface that can record two mic ins and two outs over FireWire at 192kHz/24-bit audio resolution. The most unique feature of the unit is its large, weighted, backlit jog wheel, which allows musicians to zip through their song while the backlight provides useful feedback such as a visual metronome.

The Tascam FireOne features a pair of mic inputs with phantom power and pad switches. A front panel guitar input allows direct recording of guitar or bass. MIDI input and output is also provided for 16 channels of MIDI. It also includes multi-track recording software, so you'll be set to go right out of the box. In addition to its weighted & backlit jog wheel, the FireOne has transport keys and eight shortcut keys to control functions in most popular sequencer applications.

Price: around £160

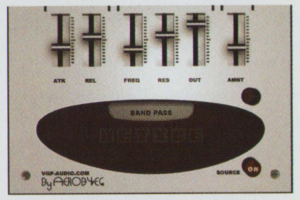
For more information please visit:
www.tascam.com

FREE STUFF! Four of the best FREE plug-ins!



ReaDelay
Multi-tap delay with tap count. Up to 10 second delay per tap.
www.cockos.com

TAL-Tube
A saturation plugin suitable for adding higher harmonics to instruments and adding more excitement and analog character to digital sounds.
www.kunz.corrupt.ch



Auto-Filter
Performs a typical "Wah" effect on drums, synths or any percussive sound you like to feed in.
www.vgp-audio.com

X-ISM
Excellent plug-in to tackle the ever growing 'Loudness War'!
www.solid-state-logic.com

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ARIES: HERBSMOKE (TC REMIX) / STRIDER: LEGENDS [COLAB009]
ATLANTIC CONNECTION: LEAVING HOME / WHAT'CHU KNOW [WESTBAY001]
BASHER & STEALTH: THE ARK / AIR RAID [FQY028]
BENNY PAGE: BALIHOO / ROCKER SWITCH [XS001]
BLACK SUN EMPIRE: BORIS THE BLADE / THE SUN VIP (FEATURING CONCORD DAWN) [BSELP001SAM]
BROCKIE & ED SOLO: REPRESENTS (CHASE & STATUS REMIX) / TURNTABLE 1 (BENGAL & ED SOLO REMIX) [UD014]
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CALIBRE: NEIGHBOURHOOD (FEATURING MC FATS) / A-SIDES : MISTA MUSCLE (FEATURING MC FATS) [LIQWEED003]
CLIPZ: DOWNLOAD / STEEL DRUMS [AZ001]
CLIPZ: PUSH IT UP / RUBBISH [AZ002]
CRISSY CRISS: US / RAT PATROL [MNB032]
DIE & CLIPZ: NUMBER 1 (FEATURING BEN WESTBEECH) / CLIMATE CHANGE (FEATURING HOLLIE G) [FCY090]
DISTORTED MINDS: FIGHT CLUB / LOOKING FOR US [DSRLTD001]
DISTORTED MINDS: OUCH (FEATURING MC FOXY) / ANOTHER FIGHT [DSRLTD002]
DISTORTED MINDS: SEARCHIN / IMPULSE [DSR009]
DJ CONNECTA: AFTERSUN / OPTIMIST: SOMEONE IS OUT THERE [XS006]
DJ HAZARD: BUSTED / 0121 [PLAYAZ001PIC]
DJ HAZARD: USE YOUR BRAIN / SELECTOR [RPG010]
DJ ZINC: SUPER SHARP SHOOTER / SO DAMN FRESH [GANJACL002]
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GANJA KRU: CAN'T HANDLE THE STREETS [FRONT016]
GENERATION DUB: SLIME / ROSE RED [PROPO015]
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INSIDE INFO: CAFFEINE / PERFECT CRIME [ROBOTIX001]
J MAJIK & WICKAMAN: CASANOVA (FEATURING TOP CAT) / C-STYLE [I-REDSPIDER002]
J MAJIK & WICKAMAN: SPACE INVASION / MENALI CREAM [I-REDSPIDER003]
JAYDAN: ICE SCRAPER / THE SECRET [BPRINT003]
KENNY KEN: MURDA YOU (ORIGINAL / BENNY PAGE REMIX) [MTR001]
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MALFOY: STREET FIGHTER / LABYRINTH [JUNC001]
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MAMPI SWIFT: ZION (S.M.O.K.E. REMIX) / SQUIDS [CHRG033]
ME & YOU: LAST NIGHT (BENNY PAGE REMIX) / ELEPHANT TAKEOVER [TRU134]
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MODIFIED MOTION: BLODDY KNUCKLES / 1 UP [FINN002]
MONOMAN: DIRTY GAMES (THE GENERATION DUB REMIXES) [CHR035]
ORIGINAL SIN: SAY / ALL I WANT [RPG022]
P-FUNK: P-FUNK ERA / XPANDING MINDS [FRONT007]
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REBEL MC FEATURING TOP CAT: ORIGINAL SES (POLICE IN HELICOPTER) / YES SELECTAH [CONGONATTY03]
REBEL MC: WARDANCE (SERIAL KILLAZ REMIX / SERIAL KILLAZ VIP MIX) [CONGONATTYREMIX09]
SOUNDCLASH: ROOTSMAN / DOPE AMMO: BETTER BELIEVE (BENNY PAGE REMIX) [DA018]
SPLITTIN ATOMS: BULLET PROOF MONK (TAXMAN REMIX) [FIX024]
SUB FOCUS: DOWN THE DRAIN / HOTLINE [FQY009]
SURVIVAL: DAWNING / SHADOW [OSMUK003]
TAXMAN: TOO BAD VIP / BLOCK [FRONT087]
TC: DEEP (FEATURING JAKES) / ROBOTS [DSR010]
TC: WHERES MY MONEY / DEEP (RONI SIZE VIP) [DSR013]
TOMMY BOY (TC): FEEL THE MAGIC / LOVING YOU [STYPE00]
TOMMY BOY (TC): FEEL THE MAGIC / LOVING YOU [STYPE006]
TOP BUZZ: LIVING IN DARNESS / THE WOK [BRSSCL006AB]
TOTAL SCIENCE: BREAKFAST CLUB (TOTAL SCIENCE REMIX) / ZERO T & BETA 2: SECADA (TOTAL SCIENCE REMIX) [CIALTD011]
YT: ENGLAND STORY (PHANTASY & SHODAN DNB REMIX) [SATIVAEASY001]
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CLIPZ

01. Clipz feat. Shiv - Loud & Dirty - Audio Zoo Dub
02. Hazard – Machete - Ganja Dub
03. Dillinja – Untitled - Valve Dub
04. Die & Clipz – Indian Summer - Clear Skyz Dub
05. DJ Marky, Bungle, Makoto - Stressed Out - Dub
06. Clipz – Offline - Audio Zoo Dub
07. Clipz feat. Hollie G – Ugly – Audio Zoo Dub
08. Dillinja - Watchin' U - Valve Dub
09. TC - Where's My Money – Clipz Remix - D Style
10. Clipz - Push It Up - TC Remix - Audio Zoo Dub

COMMIX

01. Rufige Crew Vs Commix - Envy - Dub
02. Instra:mental - Untitled - Dub
03. Commix - Wreck it - Dub
04. Rufige Crew - Sometime Sad Day - Dub
05. Marcus Intalex - The Sentry - Soul:R
06. Alix Perez, Icicle & Switch - This is How - Dub
07. Rufige Crew Vs D Bridge - Mirror - Dub
08. Commix - Belleview - Claude Von Stroke Remix - Metalheadz
09. Logistics - Slow Motion - Hospital
10. Alix Perez & Lynx - Allegiance - Soul:R

GREMLINZ

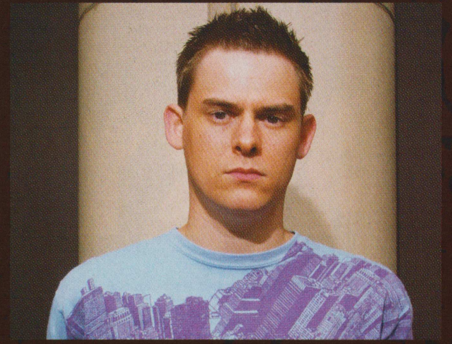
01. Naibu – Aki – Breakin
02. Digital & Resound – Rhytual - Dub
03. Loxy & Resound – Civil War – Cylon
04. Outrage & Resound – Cryonize Version – Function
05. Icicle – Final Stop – Cylon
06. Mindmap – Dizzy Dub – Xtinction Agenda
07. Naibu & Yunmee – Chaos Through the Window – Audio Decay
08. Nollige - Hunted Vip – Architecture
09. Gremlinz – Her – Vampire
10. Mutt – Ged – Audio Decay

HYPE

01. Hazard – Machete - Playaz
02. Dillinja – Shiners - Valve
03. Subfocus – Timewarp - Ram
04. Shy FX – Bambaataa (Break Rmx)
05. Original Sin - One Finger Technique
06. Original Sin - Cheater Cheater
07. D Bridge – Rapture
08. Bungle – Good Times
09. Serial Killers - Killa Klash
10. Hazard – Killaz Don't Die - Playaz

SPECTRASOUL

01. SpectraSoul - Reasons Why – Dub
02. Icicle & Nympho - Franky Mountain - Dub
03. SpectraSoul - Some Day Soon / Bloodrain – Westbay
04. D-Bridge & Calibre – Untitled - Dub
05. Zero Tolerance - Goes Around - Dub
06. SpectraSoul - The Tube - Dub
07. Icicle & Jubei - Keep Up – Dub
08. SpectraSoul - How Strange – Dub
09. Alix Perez – Stray - Shogun Audio Dub
10. Alix Perez – Crooklyn - Soul:R



LYNX
SOUL:R / CREATIVE SOURCE

Calibre (feat. DRS) - Nowhere To Run To - Signature
Possibly the best tune of the year for me. Calibre tries something different with the groove on this track; the result sounding more akin to Bugz In The Attic's fresh and vibrant style than to d'n'b. What really makes this track is the presence of DRS's vocals. It's refreshing to hear an MC try something different. In this case DRS not only raps in the verse but also has a fantastically smooth singing voice in the chorus.

Lynx & Kemo (ft. Spoonface) - All You Own - Soul:R
The first sneak preview at one of the tracks forthcoming from mine and Kemo's album to be released Spring / Summer 2008 on Soul:R. Kemo had been trying to get Spoonface in the studio for sometime before he recorded this track as a pure accapella for us. The emotion and delivery captured in Spoonface's vocals made writing the backing track a very simple and enjoyable process. The result: somewhere between Commix's 'How you Gonna Feel' and Gnarls Barkley's melancholy 'Crazy' vocals.

The Upbeats - Girl Gone - Dub
Great psychedelic prog-rock style d'n'b track with original vocals and Headz inspired beats and bass.

Subwave – Think - Dub
Subwave's 'Think' is more rolling than his usual ruffige style. Always seems to get the train spotters turning their heads towards the decks whenever dropped.

Brother – Junction - Influence Dub
Aaron Jay's brand new label Influence aims to showcase new talent for 2008. Brother comes good here with a deep, dubby, filtered amen roller. First heard Aaron drop this at Swerve, certainly grabbed my attention.

Kjell - Grand Groove - Function Dub
I rarely drop amen beats in my DJ sets, so when I do it has to be 'Grand Groove'. From the laidback smoked out downbeat intro to the whirlwind of twisted amens, and touches of hip hop.

Black Akres (ICR rmx) - Such Fiction - Misspent Music
I have received over a dozen tracks from Hungary's ICR this year. Every track has a real edge to it with nice intricate production techniques. This track sums his style up nicely. Most notably the beat is in 6/8 which is going to leave any DJ that plays it dumbfounded why the beats never loop properly! Nevertheless this is a really great listening track with its delicate pianos, choppy beats and a beautiful Royksopp style female vocal.

Hobzee & Zyon Base - Rain on Lens - Fokuz Dub
Cinematic eastern strings and atmospheric touches sum up Hobzee & Zyon Bases's finest piece of music to date. Forthcoming on their debut album for Fokuz recordings.

Lynx & Alix Perez - The Allegiance EP - Soul:R Dub
To be released February 2008. 'Allegiance', 'Randy', 'Crooklyn' and 'Inferno' have been featuring heavily in all my sets for sometime now. I think this is a strong EP and hope people enjoy it!

Burial - Archangel - Hyperdub
Ok, so this isn't d'n'b but this tune is blowing me away! I have never been a huge garage fan but this track is so emotional and raw it is really a moving experience listening to it. Everyone should go and check this out!

SIMON BASSLINE SMITH
TECHNIQUE

Drumsound & Bassline Smith - Everybody Pump (feat. Youngman) - Technique Dub
I have been playing this tune for my last tune in my sets for more than 6 months. Its got a great half tempo intro full of deep textures and silky smoove flavours. Youngman hit's the spot with a fabulous vocal line before the drop of 'Pump - Everybody Pump' and the dirty bassline licks you in the head!

Sonic & Silver - Rocket Launcher (VIP Remix) - Virus
It's good to see the former boys from Manchester revamp this classic Virus tune. I used to cane the original back in 2001 and this revamp kills it! Crisp intro of hats, pads and textures takes us into a drop - the calm before the storm and then its lift off! It's pure 2007 funk. Big tune and I know they have more on the horizon.

Drumsound & Bassline Smith - Belly Dancer - Dub
This track stinks of eastern promise… Its time for all the girls to do the 'Belly Dance'! Another trade mark Drumsound & Bassline production which was built for the dance-floor and it's been getting big love by DJ's and ravers. Expect this to be doing the rounds in 2008.

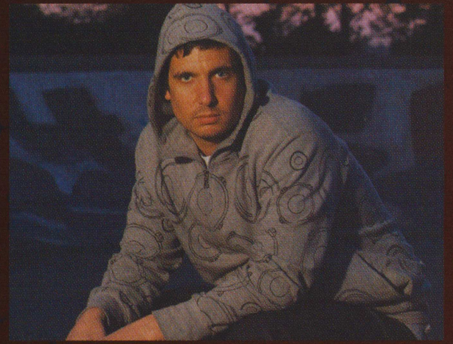
Jonny L - Harry - Dub
This track sounds like a train is headed right at ya and its going to mash down all in its path. Jonny L comes correct everytime and this is quite a simple loop that just grinds away until ya just have to nod ya head. Filter sweeps and repetitive bass hook. Really feeling this one.

Zero Tolerance - Goes Around - Shogun
Yes, I am really feeling ZT tracks right now. This one is forthcoming on Shogun and is a deep soulful, funky affair with the baddest bassline! I am expecting big things in 2008 for this boy who seems to be able to roll out quality beats on a really consistent basis.

Terravita - Project Mayhem - Technique Dub
The boys from Boston USA are really getting the production tight and this is a fine example. It's a Big bassline, big Synth ,big party explosive track. Check the change of bassline half way through. Played this every set of the last few months and it's a big tune!

Technicolor - Good New Green - Technique Dub
This is a good quality piece of liquid funk produced to the highest standard by Technicolor, a new signing to the Technique camp. It's a cross between Zinc & High Contrast and has been going down well at all the parties I have been playing .Its good to see another fresh faced producer come with the goods.

Fresh - Clap - BBK
This tracks been smashing up dancefloors all over the place. Its unmistakable bleep intro sets the tone for this new meets oldskool sounding riddim. Shouts of 'Clap - Put Ya Hands Up', roll through-out. Production as ever is tight and I know Fresh has a few more bits up his sleeve for early 2008.



DJ DIE
CLEAR SKYZ / AUDIO ZOO

Clipz – Offline – Dub
Clipz is back for more bassline carnage with this nasty roller. Does what it says on the tin, mashes up the dancefloor and leaves shrapnel in the roof and walls. How does he get them horrible tones???

Alix Perez – Stray – Shogun Dub
Love this vibe, proper lush as they say in Brizzle, but seriously this tune's got some soul and I'm feeling it big-time. Hot stuff on Shogun for 2008. Dreamy jungle all day baby.

Die & Clipz – Indian Summer – Clear Skyz Dub
Ok, you ready to go Bollywood? This one is a little boogie down number that will have you shaking your tail feathers and skanking at the same time. If that is possible? I dunno but it's worth a try. Anyway this is the next release on Clear Skyz, I've been playing a rough mix out for a min now and we still haven't finished the final mix. Better get moving.

Dillinja – Watching You – Valve Dub
My plate of this is rinsed out along with the rest of the Valve bits that have been doing damage this year. This is one of the tracks that didn't make it onto the 4 track 'Digging In The Crates' EP and still has some play in it. Why is it so cold?

Random Movement – A Good Start Is Saying No – Dub
I went down to hear Marky play in Bristol the other night and he drew this on me. It's got these killer Rhodes stabs/chords in it and kind of reminds me of Alex Reece 'Basic Principles'. Any how I ran upto the decks screaming rewind but Marky decided it wasn't a unanimous decision and had to decline. That's the way it goes sometimes, one man don't make a rewind. Anyway he sent me the tune the next week and I love it.

Die & Break – Coming From The Top – Clear Skyz Dub
I met Break through Fierce; he recently moved to Bristol and now lives down the road from me. Break is one of the baddest producer's out there right now and has forged many classic productions on many labels as well as the ongoing partnership he and Fierce have been producing on Quarantine. It was actually Fierce's idea that we go into the studio and this is the outcome, straight rolling jungle.

Kubiks & Crewz – Forgotten Lands – Dub
Representing the West Country with this one, two producer's from round the way team upto bring a deep roller (do I say rolling in every review?). I really like this tune and it's perfect for taking the dance a little deeper but still has the bounce to keep it bubbling.

Clipz (feat. Holly G) – Ugly – Audio Zoo Dub
More forthcoming martial from Audio Zoo and this one is a banger. From the get go it sounds like a house vibe but quickly morphs into a riotous frenzy when Holly G comes in with the nasty flows on a don't give a…punk tip. One day your rich, next day your broke. Let's Go.

Die – Jabberwocky – Dub
Better get one of my own in. I made this tune a while ago but recently done a new mix of it. It's on a funk tip and I haven't heard anyone else really do this style, dunno if that's a good thing but I'm playing it and people are getting their groove on.

CHASE & STATUS
RAM RECORDS

Sub Focus – Timewarp – Ram Dub
Another massive tune by Mr Focus - been getting hammered by Andy for a lil' while now. Great innovative production in this one - with the noises and bass being written in a triplet format, with a slight swing in the beats that all seems to straighten up and increase in tempo after 32 bars of the drop. Never fails to get a huge reaction when we play this – Nick's album is shaping up to be epic.

Dillinja – Clifton Crunch - Valve
Unmistakable Dillinja here with massive drums and huge bass, this is one of our favourite's of his new bits. Simple 32 bars of hats for the intro make this tune real easy to mix and with a melodical Reece pattern on the drop and big driving beats; this usuallly gets pulled up every time.

Shy Fx - Bambaata - Break Rmx
Where to start? The original is one of the most timeless tunes in our scene and we've still been playing it right up until we got this remix. Break really brings the tune up to date but still maintains the vibe and the skank that Shy had crafted for the original. Lots of space with a wicked groove means countless mixes can be done with this big remix of an all time classic.

Cuture Shock – Imax – Ram Dub
Ram wonderkid Culture Shock comes with the gems again with this smooth tech infused roller. Don't actually think he's finished this one yet but the beautiful music in the intro coupled with the eerie break down and jazz stabs on a rollin' drop meant we had to cut and play this. The mixdown on this track is second to none and his beats as always cannot be flawed.

Hazard - Western Riddim - Playaz
Following on from 'Busted' and 'Mr Happy' - Hazard brings another moody dancefloor destroyer which has been working real well for us. Interesting, different beat pattern, proper grimy mixdown and dirty noises make this a necessity in the bag. With other smashers such as 'Machete' lined up - the future looks very big for Hazard and the Playaz camp.

Chase & Status - Judgement (Informer)
This is a tear out number from us on a jungle vibe with organic beats, grimy Reeces and big bass. Featuring vocal snippets from Riko on the drop and tearing noises - this has been working well for us in the clubs. We've been holed away in our studio for as long as we can remember so watch this space for more music.

Pleasure - Colt 45
Long time friend DJ Pleasure has been putting his all into production as of late and his recent efforts are showing great results. The riff on this tune definitely reminds me of another big jump up tune from 2005/2006 - which will remain nameless - but 'Colt 45' does exactly what it says on the tin with an infectious melody and it's great for mixing. Look out for more from Pleasure.

Alix Perez & Lynx – Allegiance – Soul:R
These two producers have had a great year both having massive highly acclaimed tunes. 'Allegiance' really combines the minimal drums & cinematic horns from Lynx with the deep bass and haunting vibes of Alix Perez. This tune not only goes down well down at Swerve but equally at a Renegade Hardware night. Headnodding moody vibes on this one.

SPOR

01. Spor, Ewun, Apex & Evol Intent – Dirge - Lifted
02. Bad Company - Bullet Time (Spor Remix) - Bad Taste
03. Qemists - Stompbox (Spor Remix) - Ninja Tune
04. Noisia & Upbeats – Mudslide - Vision
05. Spor – Stoppit - Lifted
06. Spor - As Dust Falls - Subtitles
07. Bag Raiders - Nil By Mouth - Bang Gang
08. Apex - In Motion - Lifted
09. Evol Intent - Middle of the Night - Evol Intent Recordings
10. Spor & Phace - Dying Of The Light - Lifted

THE INSIDERS

01. Random Movement - The Things You Do
02. Survival - Cross Fire
03. The Insiders - Changes
04. Pepe Bradock - Deep Burnt (Insiders Rmx)
05. The Insiders - Fantasy
06. Random Movement & The Insiders - Untitled
07. Break - Out of Nowhere
08. Random Movement - Lesson & Aftermath
09. Naibu - Urban Sprawl
10. Will Miles - No More Heartache

CASPA

01. Rusko - Jahova VIP
02. Caspa - Lions Raw
03. Unitz - The Drop
04. Conquest - Forever
05. Matty G - Dominator
06. Skream - Calous
07. Caspa - Louder VIP
08. The Others - Champagne Cocktail
09. Orien - Chasing A Never Ending Dream
10. Klaxtons - Its not Over - Skream Rmx

CTRL Z

01. Ctrl Z vs Screwface - Stereo:Typical pt 2 -Dub
02. Pendulum - Granite (Breakfastaz Rmx) - Warner
03. Far Too Loud - Play It Loud - Funkatech
04. Ctrl Z & Screwface - Tunnel V.I.P - Hardcore Beats
05.The Wrongstars - Bring You Down (Affinity Rmx) - Dub
06.Screwface & Autobots - Final Conflict - Broke
07.Ctrl Z - The Mack - Hardcore Beats
08.Antiform - Got to be You - Broke
09.The Magnet Men - Soul Power - Dub
10.Cut n Run - Sirens - Cut n Run

DJ MARKLE

01. Martyn - Twenty Four - 3024
02. Sully Shanks - Give Me Up (LD Remix) - 2nd Drop
03. Mala – Demons - Disfigured Dubz
04. Skream - There?s a Sign - Unreleased
05. Dutty Dubz – Contact - 2nd Drop
06. Sukh Knight - Mount Pleasant - Unreleased
07. Rusko - 2 and A Q - Sub Soldiers
08. Loetech - Northern Harm - Unreleased
09. Randomer - Nothing Left - Unreleased
10. Pole Winkelstreben (Peverelist Remix) - Scape Music

drum & bass reviews

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Reviewed by: Jon Ethics, Jeryl DOA, Mark OD, Ad Vantage, Lucas Buck and Tom Green.

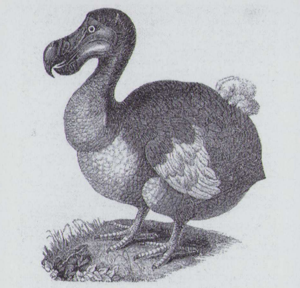


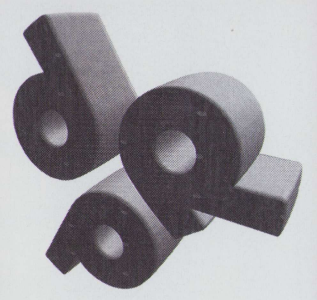
Fig.1 Disco Dodous

Lynx
Disco Dodo / Wonder
Creative Source

Minimalism (try saying that fast after a few jars) is the name of the game with one of 2007s most pivotal releases, 'Disco Dodo'. All of the Lynx trademarks are present and correct: suspense, space and bass. And by bass we mean lots of pounding, speaker-punishing bass. No wonder Marcus Intalex was keen on snapping this way-ahead number up for his Soul:R imprint, before Fabio beat him to it. 'Disco Dodo' is a track that only makes sense if you're listening to it on a decent sound system and then boy does it leave its mark engrained on your psyche. Caned by all DJs from Hype to Doc Scott, Shy FX to Fabio this is most definitely a contender for the best drum and bass track of 2007. Sound of the future.

Icicle / Switch
Strange Fruit / Hilltop View
Soul:R

Marcus Intalex & ST Files' groundbreaking label shook the D&B scene to its core with its first releases setting trends that still thrive today and this latest 10" plate from the camp maintains that tradition with flair. Icicle's 'Strange Fruit' shows why the Dutchman has seen his name rise to such prominence over the last year with its beautifully deep oscillating bassline constantly progressing beneath tight breaks and delayed Detroit keys. Just wait for the second drop. Partner-in-crime Switch delivers 'Hilltop View' on the flip, a track with classic breaks that lead you dreamily into a minimal, soul-soaked bass bin work-out with a groove to die for. Quality as per. Watch out for the Lynx & Alix Perez EP early 2008 on Soul:R!



Dom & Roland
Through The Looking Glass Part 1 & 2
Dom & Roland

We never doubted that Dom is one of the best producers, we just wondered when we were going to hear more new music from him. Well the 6 piece vinyl 'Through The Looking Glass LP' is of the highest order. Part 1 sees the Bladerunner inspired 'Deckard's Theme' open with strings that will move even the most cold-hearted of men. It drops into an emotional and militant sci-fi exploration into cinematic drum and bass. Sick. On the flip 'Cycle Of Life' steps up with a darkside futuristic flavour that's been sorely missed of late. Part 2 sees Dom heading for a classic Virus sound. Everything about this track reminds us of the 'Wormhole' era, that's a good thing by the way. Immaculate production and dirty, dark funk in the area!

Rogue Soul
Be With You / Footage
Integral

Artificial Intelligence's Integral imprint unleashes its fifth release with two luscious grooves that further bolster the young label's burgeoning reputation for absolute quality. Rogue Soul's (aka Syncopix and M. Aauer) 'Be With You' takes some wicked funk and vocal samples and laces them with layered breaks and rolling subs to deliver a real piece of 174 soul, complete with string and horn led breakdowns and a driving bass guitar b-line. On the flip is the excellent 'Footage'. Chunky snares and forceful hats weave a rhythm that plays host to looping keys and a myriad of samples scattered over an old-skool, 'Dope Dragon' style distorted bassline. Another flawless Integral release.

Greg Packer & Makoto
Pleasure / Science Fiction
Interphase

Australia's Greg Packer hooks up with Japan's Makoto to bring some Pacific bass to the latest release on Interphase. 'Pleasure' takes a luscious lead melody and laces it with a drifting, synth-soaked bassline and a generous scattering of sampled instrumentation and vocal snatches to deliver a track that demonstrates both of these excellent producer's trademark styles. 'Science Fiction' comes in all electro before that inimitable Makoto vibe rolls out, made all the stronger by Mr Packer's studio interventions. Warm, soulful and rolling, these are two tracks for anyone who likes their D&B to be deep but still energetic enough to fill a floor.

Samurai, Dash & Screwface
Sucker Punch / Freak Show
DC-Breaks

Kryptic and Samurai's Ram-associated DC-Breaks serves up its third release with two immense pieces of peak-time D&B courtesy of Samurai, Screwface and CTRL-Z's Dash. Relaxed rollers these two tunes are not, with both showcasing an enormity of sound that leaves you stunned. Fans of Noisia and what some like to call 'neuro' definitely need to check this record. There's not really much that can be said about either 'Sucker Punch' or 'Freak Show' other than that the beats are tight, the vibes are bang on and the production is superb. This is some next level drum & bass.

DJ Devize
The Jerk & Gutter EP Part 1
3DMode

Birmingham's long standing D&B soldier DJ Devize continues to build steam on his now well established 3D Mode label with this delicious piece of blue vinyl. 'Enforcer', featuring the vocals of highly underrated fellow Brummie MC Accapello, sees Devize's classic edgy vibes taken to bouncier territories, reminding you of his midlands roots with its b-line womp and roll. 'Badguy's' horror film hits, filth-ridden bass and gangster vox is pure Devize. Nasty, angry and relentless, this track irresistibly grooves and stomps its way through your chest. Big things from Devize; a man on his way up.

Axwell feat. Max C
I Found You (High Contrast Remix)
Positiva

High Contrast is a man who obviously doesn't give a damn what anyone else thinks. Over the last few years he's been responsible for remixes of some of the most unlikely chart-topping tracks, from the White Stripes to Kanye West and here we see him reconstructing one of Ibiza's (and Radio One's) biggest tracks of this summer, Axwell's old school / new school house hybrid 'I Found You'. There's two mixes on offer, both bringing very different interpretations of the original. The 'Oldskool Revenge Mix' is High Contrast in 'Basement Track' mode with its house organs and simplistic funk, while the 'Berlin After Dark Mix' is a darker, techno influenced take that provides the real incentive to grab this record.

Lynx ft. Malibu Rhodes
Shame On You / Envy
Sonorous

New label Sonorous follows up Atlantic Connection's wicked debut with two tracks from the most talked about, most original man in D&B right now, Lynx. Both tracks are further examples of his refreshing take on the drum & bass sound. Closer to 70s funk than it is to the kind of D&B found prevalent in these pages, 'Shame On You' with its electro stylings, sweeping synths and plucked bass is a proper head-nodder with attitude. 'Envy', featuring Malibu Rhodes, brings yet more of the originality that Lynx has blessed D&B with over recent months. The pure subs and stripped down breaks hark back to late 90s V Recordings but are embellished with constantly progressing instrumentation to give the track an organic, loose vibe.

Furney / Furney & Henree
Jungle Drums / Seen You Before
CIA Deepkut

CIA's deeper sister label serves up two delectable slices of liquid from Good Looking's Furney and Cologne-based Henree. 'Jungle Drums' lives up to its name in more ways than one. Classic chopped amen breaks and deep, thrusting subs give the track its groove while a looping Amazonian soundscape rolls out some rainforest vibes. A really strong, minimal track that takes elements you've heard a thousand times before and twists them into something new. 'Seen You Before' is no way near as original as the flip but is a competent enough track, with its sweet guitar piano lead and swaying vocals dancing between tight drums and comforting bass.

Q Project
Jungle Is Dead / Bess U
Machine Funk

Total Science's bespectacled Mr Quiff brings the filth on his own Machine Funk label with these two fat little ravers. 'Jungle Is Dead' is a cacophony of clattering breaks, sirens, twisted FX and infighting, distorted bass. Just as your brain processes one sound another one is thrown right at you, it even switches to an old skool interlude midway through. 'Bess U' is more recognisably Q Project, all percussive bass, ragga samples and crispy, sharp drums. If the A-side is too much for you then the 'Bess U' offers something entirely different and completes another predictably strong release from the one like Q Project.

Terravita
Adult Robot Kung Fu / Another Place
Technique

Boston three piece Terravita deliver two synth led rave-stormers for Drumsound & Bassline Smith's Technique and questions the limits of just what exactly defines D&B ever further. The intro of 'Adult Robot Kung Fu' reminds me of childhood Saturday mornings in front of the telly with its 1980s cartoon theme-tune synth and mad scientist spoken word samples. Wait for the drop though and all those innocent memories are dispelled by the wall of melodic, 174 bpm sound that fills your airspace. 'Another Place', while guaranteed to set the raves on fire with its Pendulum-esque synth and guitar interplay, will no doubt prove a little too cheesy for some.

drum & bass reviews

Taxman
Scan Darker / Bad Boy Danger
Ganja

D&B tunes don't come much bigger than Taxman's, and his latest release on Ganja proves this once again. Following the massive success of tracks like 'Too Bad', G-Dub's little brother threatens to overshadow his illustrious siblings with these two tracks. 'Scan Darker' is one of the most heavily rotated plates of 2007, with its screeching firework synths and demonic mid range riding the fattest two step groove imaginable. If you haven't heard this yet - go back to bed, this is D&B for late night ravers. 'Badboy Danger' meanwhile takes the intensity of Taxman's multi-layered synths; distorted, growling and smooth; and lets them loose over a half time break with real attitude. Another disgusting release from Ganja.

Xample
Get Out Clause / Infamous
Ram

Ram's Bristolian bass merchant Xample continues to flourish following the outlandish success of 'LowDown' earlier this year. Both tracks will be well familiar to those who like their raving; 'Get Out Clause' with its 'I Wanna Get On Down' vocal and confused metallic synths has been murdering floors for time. Dropping into a growling, distorted beast of a track, it leaves you little option but to brock out. 'Infamous' is equally hurtful, its fluttering yet filthy b-line and synth section combine with the busiest of drums to devastating effect, to complete another gigantic Ram release.

Break
Surroundings / Lost & Found
Symmetry

Break has had a year to be proud of. A key part of the Quarantine labels success, he's also had some killer tracks on Shogun, Exit, his own Symmetry imprint and many more. This is one of ATM's personal favourites, 'Surroundings' is a dubwise roller of the highest order. Coming across like a Digital classic, the space-funk intro sets the scene for its crowning moment: the unbelievably tight drum edits. Mixings has never been so much fun. Further in tubby dub bass, tidy percussion, echo-box samples and those killer drum edits make this an absolute joy. On the flip 'Lost & Found' keeps it deep and dirty with a nod to dub and the tech sound.

Phace & Misanthrop
Off Centre / Descend
Shadow Law Recordings

Two of Germany's most promising talents unite on the latest track from America's finest purveyor of darkside future filth, Shadow Law. Both tracks are unrelenting beasts, immaculately engineered and managing to maintain a real warmth despite their futuristic, technically flawless sound. 'Off Centre' is a devious little creature, beckoning you to come closer before it bares its diamond-cut teeth and bites your head off, leaving you squirming on the floor as it pounds away at your remaining senses. 'Descend' is the strongest of the pair though, it's gnawing bass lacing the very funkiest of grooves with some Bladerunner, dystopian vibes. I cannot stress enough how good this track is. Buy. Now.

Camo & Decade
Never Say Ever
Bassface Sascha & Frankenstein
Promised Land
Sidechain

Austria's Camo continues to make waves with his latest track on Sidechain. Linking up with Decade on 'Never Say Ever' to drop a light hearted piece of dance floor D&B. Although there are a fair few sounds we're all starting to probably hear enough of now, the track maintains enough variety and space in the groove to keep things interesting. 'Promised Land', from the intriguingly titled Bassface Sascha and DJ Frankenstein, is a real contrast to the A-side. Featuring the vocals of Mike Romeo, it's a nice, pacey groove that builds into some oscillating funk and full vocals to keep progressing right to the very end. Some good, interesting music coming from our European brothers.

Demo & Cease
Ladies Night / Ladies Night (VIP)
Human Imprint

Well pull my pants down and smack me across the arse! It's the biggest tune of 2007 and it's finally available on a lovable slab of huggable wax (I haven't stopped cuddling my copy since I got it). If you've heard Andy C DJ in the last year, you'll know exactly what this monster tune and its VIP offspring sound like. That now infamous "Girl, you know a bitch is a HO HOOO HOOOO" sample works its magic amidst a wash of sirens, grinding basslines and either clattering 'cutlery down a set of metal stairs' or straight up two step beats, depending on which version you're playing. Instant rewind and come again, even if it is getting on a bit by D&B standards!

Concept & Shnek
Bad Conscience / Watertheme
Invaderz Transmissions

It's great to see The Invaderz and their Invaderz Transmissions label back on the scene, and after a massive remix 12 featuring Break, Marky, Bungle & XRS on the re-rub tip, the lads take a back seat to let some fresh talent shine through. That fresh talent being Austria's finest up and comers Concept & Shnek, two names you'll be hearing more about no doubt. 'Bad Conscience' is a cunningly crafted mix of light and dark elements with an amen led break, dirty stabs and powerful bass hits, while 'Watertheme' takes things on a tripped out funk tip; slick like Rick.

Common
The Light (Brookes Bros Rmx) / Rainman
White label

Those naughty Brookes Brothers have been busy making some of the most exciting tracks in recent memory of late, 'Mistakes', 'F-Zero' and 'Crackdown' have all managed to combine an effortless blend of musical elements with beats and bass that just make sweet love to a dance floor. So taking that ethos and applying it to two cheeky tracks achieves much the same devastatingly dramatic effect. 'The Light' has been receiving much hype of late and its pop-tastic vocal snippets and rib snapping bass show you why. On the flip is 'Rainman' a track that was given away on DOA but proved too popular for an MP3 only release. Big like star systems.

Telemetrik
Cosmos / R.U.R.
Black Sun Empire Recordings

Although you may not have heard of Telemetrik and his solo efforts, you'll certainly have heard of his previous incarnation as one half of Corrupt Souls, and if you've been to a night where Friction, Klute, Futurebound, Dieselboy or any of a hundred other DJs from the D&B spectrum are playing, you're bound to have heard 'Cosmos'. Organically amalgamating analogue sound washes and ridiculous levels of technical experimentation with all the soul that is usually missing from such extensive editing and production wizardry, it seems Telemetrik has found a way to make drum & bass sound like fun while still remaining relevant in today's over-produced climate.

Infiltrata
56 Fusion / Ethio (feat. Limewax)
Infiltrata Recordings

As an integral member of Photek's TEKDBZ crew, Infiltrata is no stranger to crafting ridiculously heavy drum & bass for public consumption, but it seems he's overstepped even his own boundaries on the first 12 on his brand new label. '56 Fusion' embarks on a journey that travels through hip hop and techno territory while keeping firmly in the hard and heavy drum & bass envelope. This funky and relentless bassline is doing serious damage on dance floors! On the flip 'Ethio' - featuring the ever mental Limewax - mingles blistering bass and drums so merciless they'll knock your Nan's teeth out for her pension money then spend it on hookers.

Q Project
Tears (Marky & Bungle rmx)
State Of Mind vs. Laura Pacheco
Goodlove
Advanced

Oh yes, the latest in the 'Sektor' series is here and it's a biggie! Q Project's 'Tears' gets an irresistible Marky & Bungle relick with more sun drenched soul than a beach bum's sandals. If this track doesn't make you forget all about the winter frost then nothing will! Backing it up is a full on vocal smasher from Laura Pacheco with State Of Mind on production duties. Powerful beats and heart warming bass provide an undeniably strong backbone for Ms. Pacheco's silky and powerful vocals to ride relentlessly over.

Spectrasoul
Blood Rain / Someday Soon
Westbay International

Following a nice start to Atlantic Connection's Westbay offshoot, Spectrasoul deliver some more quality goods and the word here is deeeeeeeeeep! 'Blood Rain' chauffeurs you to an exclusive party in the back of a soul-coloured stretch D&B limo with warm bass lined seats and a chilled bottle of bubbly beat champagne. 'Someday Soon' meanwhile takes you even deeper into the wonderful world of Spectrasoul with a bassline that will rattle your teeth as it soothes your spirit.

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Nookie / Manix
The Sound of Music / Hardcore Junglism
Reinforced

Reinforced, one of the all time great jungle / D&B labels joins the repress revolution that is sweeping the scene. These two tracks, from an incredible 15 years ago, are both legendary pieces of dance music that helped define the then nascent jungle scene. Nookie's 'The Sound of Music' is a timeless piano led track, with a reggae bassline flexing out beneath uncountable breaks and pitched up vocals that will make the older ravers amongst us weep for the past. 'Hardcore Junglism' from Manix is one of those tracks that even if you think you've never heard it, I promise you that somewhere, at sometime you have. Demonstrating elements of every form of dance music that subsequently split, this is an essential history lesson for all.

Various Artists
The Detrimental EP
Renegade Hardware

Hardware follow the excellent 'Upgrade EP' with another four tracker, this time of original tracks. Spirit comes with the title track, all pounding distorted subs, staccato breaks and eerie atmospherics, its not his best work. Axiom betters him on the B-side, with lumbering percussive elements and tightly filtered Reese merging together to create the funk that is essential in drum and bass. The ever impressive EBK carries the baton further with his harsh stepper 'Scatter', laced with loose breaks and B-Boy funk. Bulletproof round things off with 'Alienscrew', rolling out with millennial vibes and growling Reeses.

Various Artists
Fat Like Your Mom Vol.1
Grid

Zen, Dubalty and Heist join forces with that master of the ridiculous, Twisted Individual on this EP from Grid. Zen's 'Break Even' remix kicks things off with a swinging, rasping bassline excursion while Dubalty drops some real Twisted inspired metallic filth on 'Bandit' that quickly switches into lush pads and mellow subs before laughing in your face and vomiting its bassline bile all over you . Twisted's cheekily references the gas explosion that blew up his house on 'Bring the House Down' in trademark style. If you like your wompers, then this one is for you. It's Heists 'UFO Watch' that really stands out though, with its rasping bass calling responses from the floatiest of bass to devastating effect.

Commix
Faceless (Marcus Intalex Remix) / Solvent
Shogun Audio

The Metalheadz' golden boys take a brief departure from the success of their recent 'Call To Mind' LP to drop a superb 12 for Friction's ever impressive Shogun Audio imprint. As ever, Friction's A&R skills are more than up to scratch, and the Brightonian drafts in Marcus Intalex to roll out a hypnotic Detroit-techno influenced remix of 'Faceless', that absolutely oozes class from every bleepy pore. Flip over and you're treated to a Commix original in the shape of 'Solvent', a track that fans of their previous work will be sniffing up like a can of Lynx through a towel (oh c'mon, we've all done it!). Top marks once again for all involved.

Various Artists
The Headroom EP
Viper

Dropping as two separate 12s but acting as an EP in name, 'The Headroom EP' combines a selection of Futurebound's favourite artists across two lovely slabs of black wax. First up, G-Dub get stuck into J Majik & Wickaman's 'Fleshwound' leaving dance floors bleeding, then those lovely Brookes Brothers bring the percussion & bass on 'Crackdown'. ShockOne drops the distorted b-line madness of 'Way You Move' and newcomer L Plus burns you up with the awesome power of 'Middle East Sun'. A set of blistering beats and no mistake!

DJ Die
Slowburn / The Reasons Why Ft. Ben Westbeech
Clear Skyz

The first release on Die's Clear Skyz imprint politely knocks on the door of the scene, rather than kicking it off of its hinges. 'Slow Burn' is a tune reminiscent of those that adorned any of Die's last few releases on Full Cycle: standard breaks and organ bass. Hardly groundbreaking, but proven to work well in the dance. Ben Westbeech provides the vocal for the flip, 'The Reasons Why'. Die gets into liquid mode and rolls out the piano stabs and filtered strings, whilst Ben croons all over the top in imitable style. A quality debut, but with a Commix remix of the seminal 'Clear Skyz' and collaborations with Break on the cards, this new imprint is definitely one to watch.

Ancronix
Lightly Salted (EBK rmx) Amaning Borderline
Sudden Def

EBK gets the Ancronix track 'Lightly Salted' by the scruff of the neck and gives it a good shake. This relick is a perfect example of how to make drum and bass funky and dance floor friendly without wobbly bass patches or over the top Reese; EBK locks a groove and repeats with slight variation. A wicked tune, which will find favour with fans of Noisia and Phace. Amaning comes correct on the flip with an original track, 'Borderline'. A stark contrast to the A-side, soulful vibes prevail here with deep futuristic samples recalling the heydays of seminal label Reinforced. Fans of his recent work on Soul;R will be all over this.

Zero Tolerance & Mosus featuring Steo
Runtime / Call Waiting
Liquid V

Since Zero Tolerance moved to London recently his production output has started to go through the roof. This is one release amongst a stack he has forthcoming and sees him hooking up with V Records and all-round fashionista, Mosus. Cooked up down in the streets around Oval, South London, 'Call Waiting' has been getting a lot of love and revisits similar territory to Zero T's sublime 'Refusal'. If you liked that you're bound to want to get in on the action on this. A hypnotic groove is spun round Steo's falsetto timbre and the bass is so dirty you'll need a good wash after listening to it. 'Runtime' is another very decent slice of drum and bass pie that rolls out nice and smooth. Tidy.

Jade
Silent Hell Silent Extent Fallin' Down
Close 2 Death

Jade has made a name for himself knocking out a succession of ear shatteringly powerful tracks across a selection of the finest labels. Now he makes his Close 2 Death debut in fine style with the absolutely disgusting 'Silent Hell'; a track so dirty we had to shower ourselves vigorously after hearing it. On the flip Silent Extent brings the equally as rotten 'Fallin' Down', a contortion of beats and bass topped off with some rather nifty rave atmospherics.

Lenzman
Caught Up (Nu Tone mx) A Sides Lustrous
Spearhead

The sampler to Spearhead's brand new compilation album 'Moodswings' is here and what a beast it is too, promising plenty of good things for the coming LP. Nu:Tone starts things off by getting to grips with Lenzman's 'Caught Up', smoothly changing the original up into a subtle bass-led roller with plenty of weight in the low end. A Sides, one of D&B's longest serving soldiers, gets glossy on the flip with the extremely funky 'Lustrous', a gorgeous roller complete with LFO warps and subtle amen embellishments. 'Moodswings' is already looking good!

Mindscape & Safir
Heatstroke / Malfunction
Resolute

The first rule of Resolute is: you do not talk about Resolute. The second rule of Resolute is: you do not talk about Resolute! Resolute is A&R'd by none other than DNAudio label owner, Squire, and promises to deliver the hardest hitting beats this side of an Ultimate Fighting Championship compilation DVD. First up is Mindscape & Safire with the face pounding 'Heatstroke' and 'Malfunction', both of which display effortlessly heavy production values alongside some of the most pleasing techno influenced D&B we've heard in ages. Buy it twice in case you lose a copy!

Kenny Ken
Everyman (Remixes)
Mix & Blen'

Kenny Ken's legendary Mix & Blen' label made a massive comeback a few months ago with Crissy Criss' huge 'Us' b/w 'Rat Patrol', two jump up numbers that tore the roof off all over the shop. And now it's time to wheel out some up to date re-rubs of one of Kenny Ken's biggest tracks, and who better to work their magic on 'Everyman' than everyone's favourite reggae abuser Benny Page, alongside everyone's favourite jump up stars Modified Motion & Faction? Two slick remixes for the price of one. Braaaaaap!

Optiv & Bulletproof
Camouflage Remix The Upbeats Anti-Social
Cyanide

Recognisable straight away if you were in to the techier side of yesteryear (those mentasms are a giveaway), The Upbeats have stepped up the drums and colourised the main hook to make a non-essential but justifiable remix of Optiv and Bulletproof's 2003 classic on 1210, complete with subtle details for the listeners among you. Over on the flip is the Noisia-esque slam of 'Anti-Social', with its maelstrom of mutated mid range and synth drop out edits. This 12 is a definite for fans of the New Zealand duo; for those who are feeling nostalgic and for those who want something fresh.

Mistabishi
No Matter What / Lowlife's Theme
Hospital

Always with an ear or three to the ground the Hospital crew pick up on the talents of new kid on the block Mistabishi. A city banker by day but junglist soldier by night Mista has already released on the likes of Virus. 'No Matter What' begins as pure Hospital with an uplifting old-skool piano riff and a sweet sexy vocal refrain souring on top. The switch into dirty Reese is a little unnecessary but try telling that to the sweaty ravers down at Heaven or even Jo Whiley. Thankfully though the feel-good vibes return again with that smile-smearing piano lick; always a good look. The flipside is more subdued with squelching bass and cool edits all the way home.

Lynx
Distance Zero / Heat Haze
DSM

What a year it's been for Lynx, one of the standout producers of 2007. Here we see him drop a ludicrously luscious piece of tunage from the Deep Soul Music camp. A beautiful, melancholic piano motif intros over light crispy amen breaks, ready to transport us to warmer climates. As it drops into a stabbing b-line with rich overtones it does just that, enveloping us in its ethereal atmosphere and Balearic lead melody. 'Heat Haze' sees things getting a little dirtier but still retains smooth chords and a very sexy synth over some crunching techno b-line bizniz. A good sign of things to come from the relatively young DSM label.

Various Artists
Visitations EP Pt 3
Liftin Spirits

Ant Miles continues his glorious comeback with another four Ram-rolling flavours for the ravers. '200 Degrees' sees him team up with Sparfunk for perhaps one of the best cuts of the series so far. A Jaws-like intro makes way for a longed out vocal tone before the tough two-step beats and subtle Reese thump in and we're away. Rock solid. 'Integrity' on the flip pounds hard yet again much in the same vein. 'Set Me Free' harks back to the 'Evolution' sound, with vocals coming from Sare X dripping liquid vibes over the trademark teched-out beats. Finally 'Smokescreen' brings an elastic b-line workout for us to step to. The Hornchurch heavies have struck again.

Shimon
Gunslinger / The Damned
Cymbalism

Once destined for release on Ram Records, Shimon's 'Gunslinger' only ever made it onto a handful of white labels before mysteriously disappearing into the ether. However, that's about to change as Cymbalism unleash the track that's been shifting on eBay for up to £80 a shot! Not one to rest on his laurels, with the launch of his own Audio Porn imprint and solid releases on the aforementioned Ram, Shimon belts out another smasher for the flip in the shape of 'The Damned' which will have fans of dance floor drum & bass screaming for the reload.

Subsenix feat. Essence
Drop In The Ocean Krooked Serious Sound
Dirty Habit

Dirty Habit made a big splash recently with Dash & Samurai and Agent Alvin, and the ethereal vocal loveliness of Subsenix and Essence's 'Drop In The Ocean' will be getting people damp in the pants region too, no doubt. If you're a fan of slickly produced and epic sounding drum & bass then this one is for you. Krooked gets bent on the flip with his own very 'Serious Sound' and a proper mashup it is too, powerful beats and bass for the floor. Biggles!

Budok
Ritual Spinor Monoch
Tilt

Germany's Tilt Empire drops another slab of refined, tech related D&B with this, their eighth release. Budoka's 'Ritual' uses tight live drums, a sitar melody and slices of contorted Reese mids to create a serious, forward moving track that will add dimension to a harder set or tech-up a deeper one. Flip over for the premium damage of Spinor's 'Monoch'. This militant piece of techno wizardry hits hard and doesn't stop with its big bass, nasty keys and oblivion vibe making this another solid 12 from Tilt Recordings that will please DJ's and punters alike. Go tilt your head in the right direction.

Survival & Zero Tolerance
Back East / Cold Blood
Revolution

The maturing Revolution Recordings strengthens its reputation with a release from a potentially explosive team that won't disappoint the deeper heads. 'Back East' gives us light, mixable beats accompanied by soothingly thick atmospherics full of Eastern inspiration. It then drops with watertight synths and an almost hardcore sounding bass knock whilst keeping it aurally interesting to the end. 'Cold Blood' is a more sinister affair and, with its bubbling b-line, is more akin to the Quarantine sounds. That's to say- it's subtle, DJ friendly and rolling to full effect. Another well rounded 12 from a label that is really making a name for itself.

Kubiks
The Transition / Losing Track
Nu Directions

Kubiks unleashes his first solo project on Nu Directions and it's steeped with his ever-improving production techniques. Rather large atmospheric pads pave the way from the off, surrounding and lulling us with the staggered breaks that build to the drop. Hold on to your caps as the deep sub then hits and the mid-range is teased by a snarling bass that's sure gonna hurt on a big rig. 'Losing Track' on the other side does yet more damage as Kubiks again builds up the pressure and unwinds, taking much the same formula as 'Transition' but with gnarly analogue stabs scattered sparingly throughout.

Cabbie
Mr Jah / New Style
Chronic

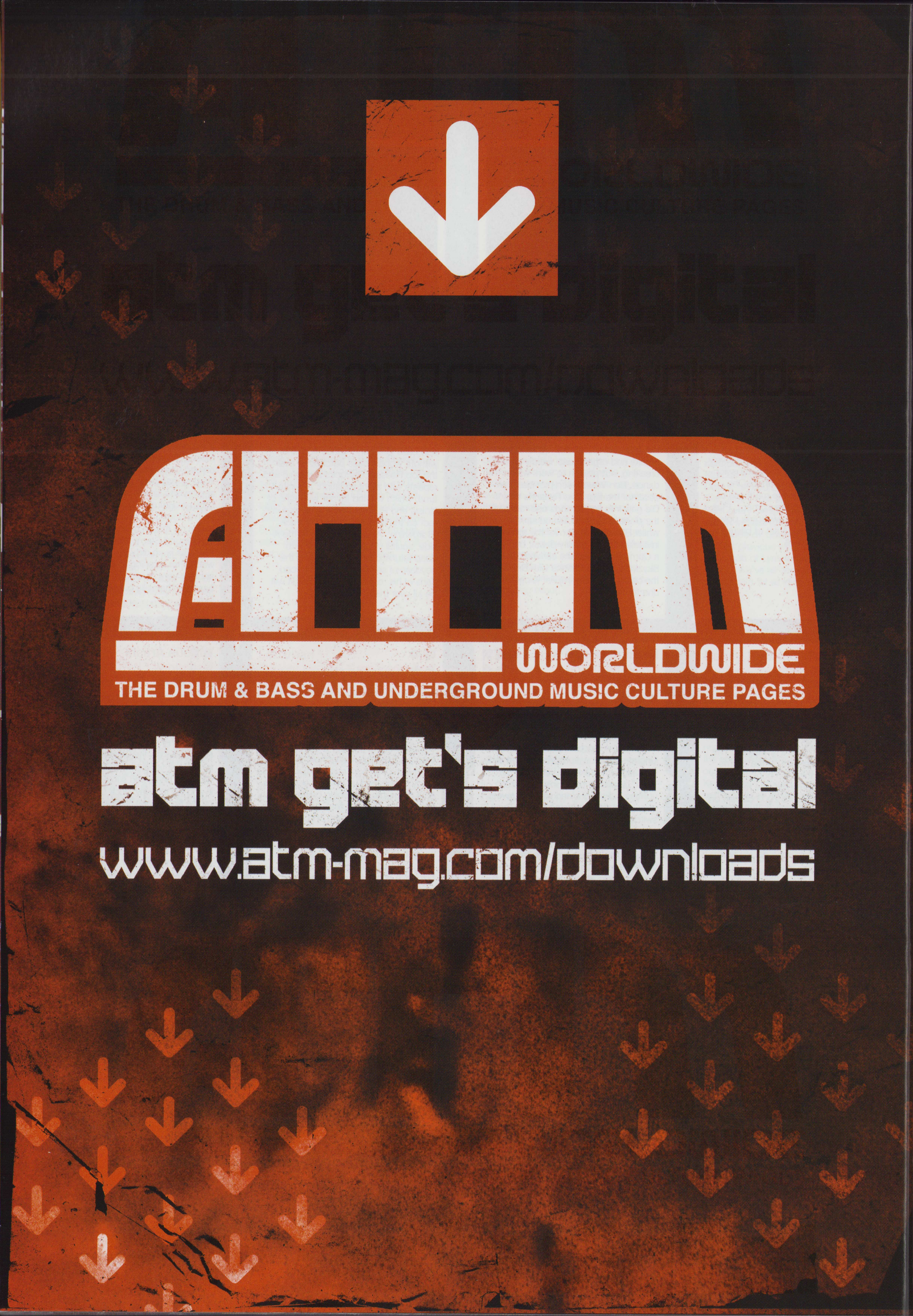
Reggae is the major influence on 'Mr Jah' and fans of the Chronic sound will be desperate to get their hands on this big jump-up tune that has been a bit hit in the hands of Mr Bryan G in recent months. This is peak time, sweaty and in-your-mush drum and bass. 'New Style' drops the unmistakable vocal sample from many moons ago with hype samples, a bouncy bassline and a classic Bristol-style break. Big and bashy as always, from Chronic.

Potential Badboy feat. Junior Dangerous
Hot Girls / 4 D Girls Dem
Jekyll & Hyde

Potential Badboy continues to drop his inimitable brand of JA styled D&B with two more odes to his favourite subject, girls. 'Hot Girls' features the toasts and chants of Junior Dangerous over a genre defying half-time groove. With its catchy chorus and shuffling rhythm it's an infectious track that would fit well in many a DJs record bag. '4 D Girls Dem' kicks off all soulful with some near horizontal, laid back, sun-soaked vocals that soon subside into a teeth shaking b-line with harmonics so rich it hurts. This really is an absolutely wicked track from the veteran Badboy and completes one of Jekyll & Hyde's strongest releases to date.

D-Kay
Dubplate / Comet
Bingo

Fresh from his mixing duties on the fourth installment of the Bingo Sessions CDs, Austrian D-Kay delivers the label's latest pair of tracks. Bingo seems to release a plate every week and have a range of artist's providing the goods. 'Comet' begins with sci-fi spoken word samples before the simplistic womp of a bassline and delicate two step beats take control. Repetitive but entrancing, this track shows sometimes less is definitely more. 'Dubplate' is another Zinc influenced jump up roller,that nods to the past with its busy amen drums, clichéd 'Pussyclaat' samples and elastic wobble. Two tracks that may not be the most groundbreaking or original slabs of D&B, but that do exactly what they're supposed to; make you wanna dance.



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hip hop reviews

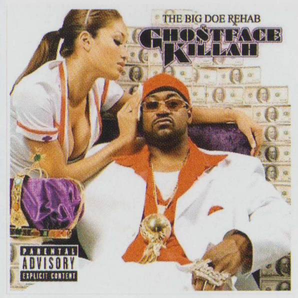
Reviews by: Jesse Keene & Laurent Fintoni

Metabeats
Metaphysical
Associated Minds

It's been a while since the UK Hip Hop scene has seen a new talent emerge. Metabeats hails from Cardiff and brings some heavy production to your speakers with this LP that sets the scene for some speaker-popping flavour to come. Head nodding, spine crunching impact is the name of Meta's game and he has enlisted a great host of UK MCs to make this project stand out from the crowd. Heads like Ralph Rip Shit, Junior Disprol, Skamma and Optimus Prime all add their own distinct flavourings to the proceedings. Opening track 'The Coming' rolls in like a thunder cloud off the Atlantic Ocean; pure hip hop like you thought had been forgotten in the sands of time.

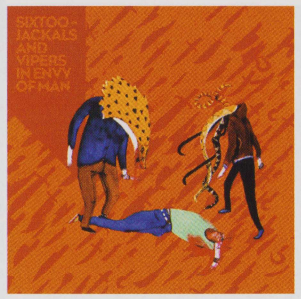
Peanut Butter Wolf Presents 2K8
B-Ball Zombie War
Stones Throw

Featuring new collaborations by Talib Kweli, Q-Tip and MF DOOM rapping over beats produced by the late J Dilla, Madlib, Guilty Simpson, Percee P, Koushik, and J.Rocc this compilation ticks all the right boxes straight away. For the last 10 years Stones Throw has become synonymous with a quality sound and an artist rooster to die for. So really, you just know this is gonna be banging from beginning to end. There's not been many compilations out this year that have really caught my attention but this one deserves a look without a doubt. It's one for fans of the label and for everyone else it's some damn fine hip hop compiled by the man in the know.



Ghostface Killah
The Big Doe Rehab
Def Jam

Compared to the incredibly high standard of the Wu in its early years, Ghostface Killah's recent output has not been the best. He has, however, always had one of the better flows, which he continues to put to good use. This new album doesn't have much on 'Fishscale', but it's still a nice slice of Wu action and features Method Man and Raekwon among others. The best tracks are those that go for the simple approach – instead of sampling a famous break they've just licensed the original and let Ghost rip on it. This is definitely one for the fans, though you might find something you like in there even if you're not a die hard Wu fan.



Sixtoo
Jackals and Vipers in Envy of Man
Ninja Tune

Sixtoo returns to Ninja Tune with thirteen slabs of instrumental hip hop that catch you with their simplicity and intricacy from the first few bars. Riffs, melodies and hard drum breaks combine to deliver some moody and cinematic vibes. It's more than just simple production though, with edits of recorded live portions reworked into the beats, including some wicked piano by Jef Neve. Despite all this, this LP still fails to make a memorable impact. You'll find listening to it in the background while doing something else is pretty easy – and when enjoying it like that, it's a great album. Try and focus on it too much though and you may find there's not much for you to actually enjoy.

Various Artists
We Are Vol. 1
Uncommon Records

Ok, this release is something that I need to bring to your attention. It was passed onto me by a friend who had been given two copies of this album. So far it's been the best gift of the year. Although slightly dated, this compilation showcases the talent of the Uncommon roster featuring artists like The Presence, Masai Bey, Nasa and Centri to name a few. Its full of heavy, electronically driven b-boy breaks intertwined with clever word play and some dope instrumentals. If you're a fan of the Definitive Jux camp you need to hunt this down as soon as you can - this is some uncommon dopeness that you need to treat your ear canal to.

Chain Of Command
Rogue State
Merciless / Dented Records

Alongside DJ Snuff, Chain of Command run & host Speakers Corner in Brixton; the leading open mic night in the UK. The crew itself consists of Conflix, CLG, Manage & Syanyde with Chemo 7 Beat Butcha handling production duties. The main thing with this project is that all the diversities of the featured artists combine to make this a joy to listen to. The beats are rugged while the lyrical content is intelligent and engrossing at the same time, although being 10 tracks deep and three of those being bonus instrumental, it's just the right amount of content to keep you hankering for more. A rogue state of mind for rogue speaker systems.

Blue Scholars
Bayani
Rawkus

Just as the winter chill sets in, the sound of something a little lighter fills the speaker box. Blue Scholars are a two man crew consisting of Sabzi (beats) & Geologic (rhymes), bringing thumping hip hop along the lines of Giant Panda, J5 and Ohmega Watts. As you can gauge by the comparisons drawn above, this music is of a funky kind, sounding as good on jam floors as at home. The rhymes are tight and Geologic's flows are on point while Sabzi's beats are crisp and diverse enough to keep your interest from beginning to end. Not so much a dynamic duo than a comparable variable of a pairing. A fresh sounding album that has all the right ingredients.

Triple Darkness
Anathema
Higher Heights Records

'Anathema' is a straight-up ruff grime UK hip hop single done properly. The Triple Darkness crew spit fire on a dark and dirty London beat provided by Chemo, who has been crafting some of the filthiest instrumentals for some time now. This tune will make you screwface and wanna start a mosh pit, although that may not be the best idea if you are on the bus with your headphones on. On the B-side 'Heresy' feat Kyza is another Chemo masterpiece; a simple production with a guitar loop that weaves in between the kick and the snare. The combination of Chemo and the boys reppin' E5 is complimentary and makes this one of the strongest UK hip hop releases this year.

Guilty Simpson
Get Riches
Stones Throw

'Get Riches' is the first single from Guilty Simpson's forthcoming album 'Ode To The Ghetto'. It's a slow, dark piece of Mr Porter production that Simpson rides effortlessly with his deep, wise Detroit accent. The hook drops in with an obvious but fitting violin sample and vocals reminiscent of Big Pun. On the flip ('She Won't Stay at Home') Guilty gets a few things off his chest about one special lady, who it appears has been giving him some grief of late. It's a very interesting and experimental beat from the one and only Madlib that makes this single worth buying just for the instrumental. Stones Throw fans won't be disappointed, another strong release.

Kel Spencer
The Building
White label

New York's very own Kel Spencer comes with a dance floor banger of a single. With a bassline you can't help but nod your head to and a beat Lil' Jon would be proud of, Mr Spencer will have you moving across your living room like Usher. Kel bounces along the track in true Brooklyn style, after four lines you'll be reaching for the rewind button. Also on this Brooklyn Spartans mixtape is 'When I See You' (remix), 'Get It Get It' and my favourite 'The Definition'; a light sprinkling of pianos and cuts courtesy of the legendary Jazzy Jeff complete a lush summer number that should be played while doing 10mph in your soft top (if you've got one).

Various Artists
Signal Path
Content Records / Styge

'Signal Path' is a worldwide compilation in more ways than one. Co-released by Finnish label Styge and US imprint Content, it features artists from Japan, USA, England, Hong Kong and Finland. The 10 exclusive tracks represent a wealth of diversity and uniqueness with artists like 2tall, DDay One, Dextah and Millimetrik. The artists may be separated by distance but 'Signal Path' is a strong, coherent compilation which highlights some of the finest instrumental hip hop out there today; bubbling beneath the surface, united by an irresistible groove and manifested in a different shape on every track. Don't sleep as this is a strictly limited release with only 1000 copies available.

The Bug
Poison Dart
Ninja Tune

This is the latest single from the forthcoming LP showcasing a sound that takes cue from the energy of grime and combines it with the bass weight of his previous work. Warrior Queen provides vocals on the original, while Flowdan drops in on the vocal remix 'Stampin'; a fine example of dancefloor devastation at its best. Regardless of attempts to pigeonhole, it sits nicely on its own and would provide some serious energy in any dance of any genre. Remixes come from a range of bass specialists including Skream and DJ Baku, who offers the freshest take of the lot; flipping the original, remix and additional vocals into a wicked megamix inspired by the days of hip hop past.

dubstep reviews

Reviews by: DJ Markle & Chris G

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Jakes
3KOut
/ 2 Steps Back
HENCH

Bristol's impeccable HENCH crew finally drop their much anticipated first release after steadily building their rep worldwide over the last 18 months. Setting the standard to come Papa 'Ench Jakes proves he's as much of a talent in the studio as he is on the mic with these two ridiculous bassline excursions. '3KOut' doesn't fuck about, dropping straight into some underwater, fluttering b-line oscillations that twist up your face and drop your jaw to the floor. On the flip '2 Steps Back' brings more of Jakes' insane subsonic manipulation to a scattered, skanking beat to complete a 12 that reaches in through your eye-sockets and mashes up your insides. Who said you couldn't rave to dubstep?

Dark Angel
Two Faces
/ Cool and Humble
Boka

Instead of ripping the vocals from classic reggae tunes, a technique prevalent in dubstep, the honourable folk at Boka have had the good sense to invest in the real deal. West London's Dark Angel voices two cuts in classic deejay style. The B-side is a return to tradition; 'Two Faces' is almost straight up revival reggae, showcasing a clear vocal talent mixing chat about backstabbing negative types, whilst giving thanks to Jah. Flip it over and we have Untold's rave infected remix of 'Cool and Humble', which rattles along while managing to cram in breaks, 2-step, jungle and half-step influences. Reminiscent of Shut Up and Dance but with an added twist and plenty of attitude.

Forsaken
Boat Noodles
/ Erstwhile Remix
Punch Drunk

Punch Drunk continues its mission to push forward thinking Bristol based music with this fantastically original release from Forsaken. With the focus heavily on live instrumentation, the A-side, 'Boat Noodles', flies in the face of conformity, ever broadening the definition of what dubstep can be. The track is wonderfully complex and at no point becomes tired or repetitive. The B-side sees Forsaken remix Peverelist's debut hit, 'Erstwhile Rhythm'. Sweet, shuffling drums and a warm, rounded bass line give the track a light hearted energy, whilst the piano hook is filtered and twisted, continually forming new melodies and textures. Musical in the truest sense of the word, this is a 12 awash with sophistication.

Peverelist & Appleblim
Circling
/ Over Here
Skull Disco

Two of Bristol's most exciting producers join forces on the latest 12" from Skull Disco. The magnificent A-side 'Circling', is delivered with a purposeful subtlety that is characteristic of both artists. Thick, dub textures surround a bassline that sounds as if it's been kidnapped from a dance floor banger and then gagged to keep it quiet. Stabs of sub-bass add further sonic width to the track, balancing the intricate, percussive high end perfectly. The flip, 'Over Here', is an exploration of atmospheric minimalism that manages to be both sparse and beautifully melodic. This release continues Skull Disco's tradition of releasing ground breaking music and is sure to appeal to listeners from far beyond the dubstep scene.

Martyn
Velvet
/ Twenty Four
3024

Of Dutch origin but now residing in Washington DC, Martyn is a scene hopper too, having made his name in drum and bass with key releases on Marcus Intalex's imprint, Soul:R. But don't let that put you off. On the contrary; this inaugural 12, given life through Martyn's personal label, needs to be bought on sight. Etched within the black petrol based grooves are two luscious weaves of macaroni texture. 'Velvet' delves into deep Balearic tones whilst surfing on a thick driving wave of bass. 'Twenty Four' positively reverberates with Detroit soul, bumping along with progressive 2step references before finally building into an absolutely sick second drop. Utter joy.

JazzSteppa
Jakin
/ Two
Hotflush

This Berlin four piece fuse live instrumentation with primitive electronics to provide a primordial jam sandwich. 'Jakin' pins the crew's obvious love of all things horny and rootical firmly to their breasts, creating an atmosphere and tension not unlike a Rhythm and Sound plate, but bashing it with a spiked bat every so often to wake the listener from their meditative stupor. Turn it over and you'll find 'Two', which discards any overt rooty pretence in favour of car jacking aggression; sounding like Rusko smacked up to the eyeballs on amphetamines. I'd like to see them reproduce this live, but fear that like live drum and bass, it would lack the balls to truly represent.

Skream
Skreamizm 4
Tempa

Tearing the arse out of the dubstep scene is something Skream has been doing since his early forays on Big Apple as a 17 year old. This, the fourth barrage on his Skreamizm series, takes his ever-evolving sound further into the disenfranchised technoid nightmare of his mind's hard drive. Six tracks of utter nosebleed spastication – 'Oskillatah' and 'Tek A Pill' bleep and wobble the fixings off the wall, 'Wobble That Gut' and 'Shake It' stalks into rumbling sub-bass territory, 'Nemisis' gets all predatory and '2D' stands out like a giraffe in an Ibizian nightclub. This is the future soundtrack to the disaffected youth. I predict a riot.

Subeena
Circular
Immigrant

An all girl affair (calm down lads, not like that. Jeez!) I, Subeena and Dot take control of the second release on the burgeoning Immigrant records, and up the stakes after their rather luke warm debut. Subenna's 'Circular' pushes our ears to the ground as a herd of angry buffalo's rumble over the plains of Africa, watched by a herd of tribal percussionists; the pulsating incantations both hypnotic and instinctual. Sparing partner Dot, doesn't let up the pace, launching a sub-aquatic mission into the gluttonous underbelly of an ecological disaster; 'Chemical Waste' is pure throbbing, techno gristle. With additional Radio One support from the Hobbster, this should plant these cats firmly on the map.

D1
I'm Loving
/ Instep
/ Speed
Tempa

Pure good time vibes on the A-side of the new Tempa 12 as D1 unleashes his dubstep / funky house hybrid, 'I'm Loving'. The track is a ray of sunshine in a scene that is far too often unnecessarily masculine. Proud to be joyous, the track rides a swung 4/4 beat pattern and upbeat bass line, whilst the vocal and melodic accompaniment give the track a euphoric, almost Balearic vibe. It makes me want to be on beach somewhere, cocktail in hand. It's the perfect winter tonic! The B-side is a more typical dubstep affair, with 'Instep' and 'Speed'. As we've come to expect from D1, both tracks are very melodic and are all the better for it.

Clouds
Mighty Eyeball Rays
/ Talks Of The Prejudice (Remix)
2nd Drop

Finnish dubsteppers Clouds take up the reigns for the third release on 2nd Drop. The A-side, 'Mighty Eyeball Rays', is a gritty avalanche of sound that has more than a hint of 8-bit mayhem to it. Chopped and skewed vocal samples, computer game melodies and crushed drum hits are all in abundance, but it is the nosebleed inducing bassline that takes centre stage here. This is a track that grabs you by the balls and then laughs at how inadequate you are. The B-side sees Clouds remixing Finnish Roots band, Healing Of The Nation. Irie vibes meet synthesised bass steppage, with a sing-along vocal that is sure to work wonders on the dance floor.

Roxy vs El B
Endorse & Set It
/ 2 Bad
/ Endorse & Set It (Bump Mix)
Ghost

The return of El B's now legendary Ghost imprint, which played such an influential role in the formulation of the dubstep sound, is very exciting news indeed. The A-side, 'Endorse & Set It', sees Ghost Studios putting their own unique twist on the modern half step sound. Big, shuffling snare rolls, sit atop a true sound system bass line that wouldn't be out of place on a roots tune. The first track of the B-side is more old skool, with bouncy garage vibes gleefully reminding us of what we've been missing. The Bump Mix of 'Endorse & Set It' adds a more upfront bassline to the track and is bound to get asses shaking in the dance.

Martyn
Suburbia
/ All I Have Is Memories
Applepips

It is Martyn who is entrusted with the first release on Appleblim's new label, Applepips. First up is the fantastic, groove lead, 'Suburbia'. Pockets of tightly controlled, dub drenched chords give the track depth but never let it languish, rather allowing it to continue moving effortlessly forward. Martyn's love of Detroit techno really shines through on this track, and when combined with shuffling 2step beats the effect is quite magical. The B-side, 'All I Have Is Memories', is even funkier, with more swung, future garage beats and a warm Reese bass line. All in all, a very strong first release that sets Applepips apart from the crowd. Definitely a label to watch out for in 2008.

breakbeat reviews

Reviews by: SOTO & Joe Gamp

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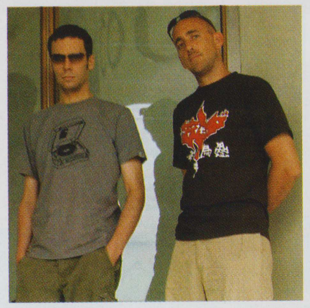
Napt ft. MC Skibbadee
The Rollers
/ Intergalactic
Subfrequency Funk

This absolutely blew us away on the first hearing and it hasn't failed to please on every listen since. The swirling intro descends into summery Ibiza disco 4x4 (but don't let that fool you!), Skibbadee soon punctuates with his lyrical stylings and the mood switches to that of the underground on the first drop, care of a booming bass and a clap thwack break. A perfect and intelligent melting pot of disco, ghetto funk and peak time D&B energy. The flip is a lusher, deeper P-funk expedition or should that be N-funk as the funk does indeed belong to Napt! Napt are one of our favourite producers right now fusing intelligence with dance floor capabilities as this release shows.

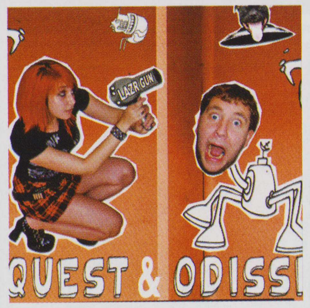
The Wrongstar Society
Bring U Down (rmx) / Give It To Them / Freakshow
Botchit Breaks

The alarming synths and whooping distortion of 'Bring You Down' are backed by a staccato guitar riff, looped to create a chunky break. Think 'The Matrix' soundtrack, with a Propellerheads twist. Techy, futuristic and relentlessly pounding, it's jammed with wobbling attitude and spite. Remixed by Affinity of Hardcore Beats, it's got that tear-out magic too. 'Give It To Them' sounds like an Atari being brutally destroyed in a stepping, floor orientated tune. Just before the annihilating break, a plucked jazz bass fires up, flanked by tickling funk guitars. Finishing off is 'Freakshow', a playful MC style reflective of Kid Acne / Beastie Boys, with a live slow'n'low bass and heavy guitar. A nice package.



Groovediggerz
Get Fresh
Breakin' Even

Bouncing from your speakers like huge, rubbery chunks of bass, this new release from the Groovediggerz is bound to get those heads down with its bounding energy and fat chunky funk. There's even an emotive 'hands-in-the-air' epic bit with emotive chords and uplifting musical bits, man! It's deep, dude. And then it kicks you right up the jacksie again and brings you right back to the floor with its pounding kick! Full, fat and warm with plenty of bouncing bass and an old skool hip hop 'That's Fresh' vocal sample. There's also a more linear electro-tech remix from Sam Hell on the flip.



Quest and Odissi
Break Me
Botchit & Scarper

Quest blasts back onto the scene with some rather naughty tracks that will certainly prick up your hairs and clean out those ears in a triple pack of fresh floor raisers. The original mix is a spunky, provocative toilet tune; grimy, dirty acid licks, electro cuts and a snarling, growling, constrained bass line, all chopped into a booty shaking glitchy plate, with Odissi offering tantalisingly deviant vocals. The Pyramid remix features tear-out innovators Inch and Ken Mac, and is the finest of the three tunes. It keeps those mystical eastern-promise style acid riffs and the glitched computerised feel, whilst Inch's hammerhead smashes through giving the tune a more wobbly tempo with extra snares and kicks.

Roxiller
Roxiller Must Die
/ Last Rites
REC

Chris Carter and Jhz are Roxiller. Keen not to pigeon hole their label as breaks, house or techno, they'd rather pull on all these influences and create a cross pollination of genres. The A-side, despite it's 4x4 intro, soon builds into techy breaks, complete with off kilter edits, vocal samples and trademark Carter drum rolls; all culminating in a somewhat sinister Jekyll and Hyde house of horror breaks number with oodles of funk! The flip is actually much scarier, a full on 4x4 tech, house, techno bastard! Well executed with the attention to detail you'd expect.

Def Inc
Filthy Dirty
/ Freak and Fry
Botchit Breaks

Fifty thousand watts of funking! Def Inc returns with a new cut that further progresses his bomb drop style of production. Up first is 'Filthy Dirty'. Snappy ticks and lush, weighted drums build up and grab you just in time for the epic, conscience questioning trance synth that bubbles away beneath immoral lyrics ("Obscene, dirty, filthy, ah yeah"), before a high resonating bass line wobbles and fluctuates in, synched with the psychosis inducing melodies of the tune. Reverse for 'Freak and Fry', a glitchy stomper that provides rave style chopped up vocals, a warm, subby bass line and glitchy tweaks diving in. Wobbly, jump up stuff. Def Inc prove again that combining the different flavours of dance music can severely shake things up.

Slyde2
Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang
Finger Lickin Records

Exclusive! Read all about it! A fresh track landed on my virtual doormat and I cried with joy as it revealed itself to be the new track from Slyde; a taster of the album to come early next year. Keeping in line with the no compromise, hard line edge and rock aesthetic, 'Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang' employs power-up Nintendo samples bent and warped into a rapid fire bassline. With the snotty vocals of the title ringing in your ears, along with the deep, jagged edge rhythm that keeps stabbing its way in, this tune promises to be a flat out, glitched up club smasher.

Noisia / Jonny L
Brain Stitch (Aquasky rmx)
/ Back To Your Roots (Quest rmx)
Shogun Audio

D&B's DJ Friction has obviously got a taste for the breaks. Following on from his 'This Way Up' mix a couple of months back, his highly regarding Shogun Audio label makes its first foray into breaks with these two kicking tracks. Dutch genre hoppers Noisia get remixed by the mighty Aquasky to create a really solid, funk-soaked track on 'Brainstitch'. On the flip one of D&B's biggest anthems of the last year gets dropped in tempo and spits out its unmistakable 'Let me see you shake in your boots' vocals in time for Quest to unleash his trademark, energy drenched bass and beats. A wicked collaboration between two genres that promises much for the future from Shogun.

Baobinga & ID present Big Monster
Jump Up Get Hype featuring Virus Syndicate
Fat

An interesting fusion of styles and a fresh take on what's current here. Baobinga & ID's love of bass-led genres like grime, hip hop, b-more, breaks, techno & dirty house have all had an airing. This time it's their grimy urban side that they fully explore with the help of Virus Syndicate, spitting out lyrics with a strong Mancunian accent on this high octane, dutty, bass breaks, grime-hop fusion. Short but deadly, coming in at just four minutes long, this will provide a lethal but seriously tough injection to your set, if you and your dance floor are feeling suitably 1Xtra, if not you might scare them. But then, they probably deserve it!

Specimen A
Freak In Us ft. Miss Trouble
/ Rock This House
Funkatech

Heavy, heavy rave breaks and beats with an eastern flavour from Specimen A on this latest piece from Funkatech. Piercing synthetic stabs are the sonic punctuation to the epic angst of Miss Trouble's vocals on this poppy rave breaks anthem. The track drives along with arpeggiated bass riffs combined with tight scratching to provide some interesting sonic textures. The B-side begins full of mysterious promise before pounding you into submission with its synth-bending antics and harsh 4x4 drums that keep the track's arabesque themes pumping into your bass addled mind.

The Ragga Twins Featuring Aquasky
Let Me See Those Hands
777 Records

Another big and bashy jump up slab of breaks from Aquasky here, with vocals provided by the brilliant Ragga Twins. 'Let Me See Those Hands' is an electro laden 4x4 / breaks hybrid with a bouncing bass line lead punctuated by the Ragga Twins' electric chatter and infectious energy. A real no brainer when it comes to the igniting the dance floor. It's the remix that really innovates however. With bleeps reminiscent of the 90s Q classic 'Mental Cube' it stops and starts, to create what can only be described as bashment meets European police siren… you know that genre right?

The Wrongstar Society
And Then She Was Beautiful / Battle' ft. Esq & Mc Ikon / Merka Rmx
Unstable Label

An interesting vocal ditty dedicated to beer goggles, 'I drank, then she was beautiful'. The soundtrack to a Ren & Stimpy cartoon, translated into the medium of heavy beats, distorted bass and baggy guitar licks, 'Battle' is the rasping outpourings of a fierce little urbanite who's 'right up for it'. A bouncing distorto-glitch funk remix from Merka brings typical twiddlings and audio nonsense to this package and sets the scene for the forthcoming album which promises to have some interesting and unusual moments. A mash up of wrongness with a quirky cheekiness!

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hardcore reviews

Reviews by: **DJs Spinback** contact: Jason@imorecords.net / 07976298165 / www.imorecords.com

Heaven 7 Vs Al Storm
Take Me Away
/ Breakbeat Mix
Warped Science

Resident anthem bashers Heaven 7 & Al Storm team up for this huge release, already featured on 'Hardcore Underground 2' and Ministry Of Sound's 'Hardcore 2007 - The New Generation'. The powerful voice of Vicky Fee belting out the slightly obvious title ensures it will stick in the mind of anyone who hears it. Typically tight production, some interesting electro noises and addictive hooks are the order of the day for the A-side, while on the flip we're offered an inventive breakbeat version; with hectic breaks, rumbling subs and a massive piano hook that will guarantee any purchaser walks away happy.

DJ Sc@r
Dreamtime
/ Lift Off
Raw Elements

DJ Sc@r's debut release does not disappoint. 'Lift Off' goes back to Raw Elements roots with massive main room lead lines, euphoric breakdowns and hard, fast percussion. Guaranteed to put hands in the air and feet to the floor, this track is a firm dancefloor masher! 'Dreamtime' takes a very different route, with a strong ethnic influence using unique aboriginal and tribal sounds amongst lush breakdowns, a fast paced drum & bass section and a killer lead line drop. With additional production credits and music on this release from the likes of Fracus, Orbit 1 & Mike Euphony, this release is guaranteed to hit the spot!

Various Artists
Hardcore Underground 2
Universal

Another year, another 'Hardcore Underground' album. Once again, this album shines through and doesn't disappoint! On disc one Kurt and Trooper serve up the massively popular partycore sound as known from Lethal Theory and Thin 'n Crispy. Relentless and driving, no-one does it better. Disc two attacks the more commercial sound delivered by Al Storm & Fracus, both highly regard for their excellent productions and something demonstrated here. Disc three hints at "freeform" but is really a cross spectrum hardcore CD that changes style and keeps things interesting. Darwin, Arkitech and Nu Foundation all contribute on the production side, as well as on DJ duties. This album demonstrates UK hardcore is still a vital and diverse genre. Album of the year, again.

Darwin
Go This Way
/ All The Time
RFU

Darwin once again knocks it out of the park on his latest RFU release. Both tracks feature on 'Hardcore Underground 2', and with good reason. Taking things closer to the partycore tip than perhaps is his typical sound, 'Go This Way' uses somewhat atypical vocals alongside the layered and detailed music you'd expect, complemented by an absolutely sensational riff. The flip keeps things running in the same theme but with a more retro, ravey feel and some exceptional pianos moving the track along very nicely indeed. Another fantastic release from one of the hottest producers around. Essential.

Nu Foundation ft. Fran
Take Me Over
/ In Kontrol
Warped Science

Once again, Warped Science's Irish counterpart delivers another choice bit of plastic. 'Take Me Over' is a strong vocal piece, with vocals courtesy of Francisca Boulke, a massive trance influenced hook and liberal use of the classic 'Drumbeats Go Like This' rap bite. 'In Kontrol', as featured on Resist's 'Bonkers 16' compilation, is a tough 303 ridden beast, with its driving acid lines and frantic edits topped off nicely with a deep musical string section midway through, before dropping back into chaos! 'Take Me Over' is an instrumental version of the A-side, sure to please those not too into the vocal material.

Audioscape
Come & Save Me / Had Enough / Hidden Agenda
Warped Science

Audioscape becomes the latest notch on the Warped Science bedpost with this huge vocal-led three tracker. C'Kay debuts on 'Come & Save Me'; with its powerful diva vocals from Kelly C this one is on a ravier tip. With hoover synths ripping through the midsection and big room trance hits and pads, it's another anthemic treat from Audioscape. 'Had Enough' again features Kelly C on the vocals, with typical Audioscape production and some subtle 'radio' style vocal effects. 'Hidden Agenda', the final track on the EP, is a slamming instrumental masterpiece, with a stand-out classical orchestral section, cheekily borrowed from a dance track of a few years ago. Not much more to say on this, buy on sight!

DJ Robbo
Listen To Your Heart
/ Won't Forget These Days
UFOLOGY

Forthcoming from UFOLOGY are these hardcore interpretations of two classic dance tracks. 'Listen To Your Heart' starts with a DJ friendly intro that leads into a soft, clean piano breakdown followed by the familiar vocal. After the first verse comes a massive euphoric breakdown, followed by a killer synth riff that builds into an earth moving peak. 'Wont Forget These Days' builds with sound effects and acid hits before angelic string chords and a crisp, slightly robotic vocal hit in time for the huge drum-roll drop. The brilliant production, massive riffs and excellent vocals make this release one for your record box.

Weaver & DMO
Paradise
/ Burning
Evolution Plus

Evolution Plus show that they are still at the top of the game with the new EP from Weaver & DMO. With Weaver's first EP on Evolution Plus, this is definitely what you have come to expect from him! 'Paradise' starts off nicely with some hot vocals from DMO, nice harp, piano sounds in the intro and some lush pads in the breakdown. The main vocal hook is excellent and the hard lead gives a nice unique sound to a tune that works very well. 'Burning' is on a similar tip; driving kicks and bass, typically beefy production and more killer vocals from the talented DMO. All in all another worthwhile package.

Weaver & Andy L Feat. Fran
Cannonball EP
Hardcore Masif

'Cannonball' is already a big tune round the world, appearing on CD compilations such as 'Bonkers' and 'Hardcore Adrenaline'. The original mix starts with a funky little breakbeat then kicks in with a huge piano riff. The vocals come from the exceptional 'Fran' this time round and combined with the epic breakdown and disturbingly catchy main lead, this track will continue to do the rounds for quite some time. On the flip, Evolution's head honcho Scott Brown gets on the remix. Scott's outstanding production skills smother this dancefloor friendly rework with his usual touch of class, sure to be a big seller and push Hardcore Masif further into the realms of the hardcore elite.

Flyin' & Sparky feat. Charm
Hold on Me
Turbulence Hardcore

Flyin' & Sparky have been on the scene producing uplifting, party fuelled anthems for a good few years now. With 'Hold on Me' they team up with regular vocalist Charm to create a memorable musical extravaganza. The tough beats, bass and techno stabs on the intro make way for an epic strings and piano breakdown. Charm's thoughtful vocals about a controlling love affair gone wrong are about a million miles from a typical happy-clappy love song and set a great mood and tone that manages to be simultaneously uplifting, tough and thoughtful, but still with an edge of fun all at the same time. Another great release from the THC camp!

Scott Brown
Do It Like We Do (Al Storm Remix)
Evolution

Yet again, The Scotsman delivers another slab of anthemic wax. This time 'Warped Science's head studio whore 'Al Storm' gets on the remix duties of one of Plus System's classic tracks, and delivers the goods in dancefloor crunching fashion! It kicks off with choppy vocoded vocals, strange bleeps reminiscent of old Nintendo systems, interesting vocal effects and driving drums, before hitting the classy breakdown. A Familiar 'You and me baby, ain't nothing but mammals' vocal sample and a riff to die for all follow, before the huge piano breakdown completes a track that absolutely smashes it every time it's played. Another future classic from the Evolution camp, and another quality remix from the ever popular Al Storm.

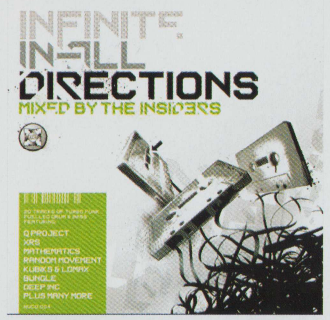
Orbit1 / Silver & Acolyte
Feel It / Thug Connected (Orbit 1 Remix)
Thin & Crispy Limited

Australian Orbit1 lets loose on Thin & Crispy Limited's 12th release. Hitting with the happier, ravier tip, 'Feel It' has been continually doing damage on the promo circuit and is a guaranteed floor smasher. Retro classic vocals, a synth riff reminiscent of DJ Demand's 'Dark & Light' from 95' and hectic 'ADD' Edits give the TNC boys another excellent track for their back catalogue. On the flip, 'Thug Connected' has been caned by the likes Robbie Long, Marc Smith and Devastate and featured on a few albums such as the recent 'Hardcore Adrenaline 3' compilation and 'Hardcore Underground 2'. Look out for this and a lengthy release schedule from the TNC camp over the next few months.

Reviews by: Jon Ethics, Joe Gamp and Mark OD.

The Upbeats
Nobody's Out There
Bad Taste

Concept albums are perhaps the strangest of musical beasts. Utter the words to anyone who got their teenage kicks during the punk era and they'll screw their face up tighter than a rude boy on crack. Prog rock outfits like Wishbone & Ash or even Pink Floyd, with their extravagant and pretentious story telling LPs, tarnished the idea of a conceptualised collection of music for many years. Times change though and in an era where Led Zeppelin have been re-lionised as musical gods, the curio that is the concept album has found its way to D&B. Taking the responsibility for this brave move are New Zealand's The Upbeats. 'Nobody's Out There' is a twenty first century fairy tale, a dark and unsettling musical soundtrack to a boy's struggling journey to regain his memory in a nightmare world. Complete with astounding artwork, full narrative prose and even animated videos, this is a work of passion and pre-meditated artistry that demands attention. Musically The Upbeats manage to inject a sense of beatific soul into the darkest of instrumentation; twisted Reeses and scattered breaks find fresh appeal within tracks like 'Thinking Cap' and 'Tonka'. This really is an amazing piece of all consuming, multi-media art that will surely elevate The Upbeats to the pedestal they deserve.



Various Artists
Infinite In All Directions - Mixed By The Insiders
Nu Directions

Nu Direction's is a label that has over its 7 year existence built a very respectable name with those who move within deeper drum and bass circles. This mix is a perfect example of the label's output with 20 tracks seamlessly mixed by Bristol's The Insider's. The production credits rollcall includes B Cee & Lomax, XRS, Mutt, Q Project, Bungle and Random Movement and as you would expect the sound is deep and musical but a constant theme throughout are the heavy, rumbling basslines to add the necessary rough to the smooth. On the mix there's nods to various influences, The Insider's show theirs on the Kenny Dope inspired 'Do Your Thing' and while there's a fair share of string-blessed soulful and house inspired moments there's equally as many dirty, moody cuts with the jungle-tastic 'Dirt Devil' by Mathematics positively basking in good time vibes. Towards the finale Lomax's low end bassline theory is put through its paces on his remix of Electro Soul System's 'Purple Sky' and once again the stirring strings are present and correct. With so many mixes out there relying on wham-bam-thankyou-mam selections as their selling point it's good to see labels like Nu Direction's doing things their own way and showing another side to drum and bass that doesn't always get the credit it deserves.

TC
Watch The Ride
Harmless Records

Bristol's TC has had an astonishing rise to fame over the last 18 months. Bursting from nowhere, he has established himself as one of the hottest in names in D&B with anthem after anthem busting out of his D-style stables and ripping the world's dance floors to pieces. Following on from his debut album 'Evolution' and the live project of the same name, it's Mr TC's turn to take control for the latest instalment in the 'Watch the Ride' mix series. Matching up to the impeccable mix Zinc dropped in the series' previous instalment was never going to be easy but what you get here is a faultless blend of good-time, dance floor D&B that flawlessly exhibits TC and his peers' synth driven take on the D&B sound. With exclusives aplenty and tracks like Clipz's 'Rubbish', Taxman's 'Too Bad' and Hazard and D Minds' 'Mr Happy' the intentions for this mix are clear. It's not all massive synths and 2step beats though, as tracks like Logistics' 'Together' and High Contrast's 'If We Ever', combined with MC Jakes' restrained and complimentary vocals, give this mix a real sense of texture and variety while still maintaining a thoroughly raving vibe.

Various Artists
Bingo Sessions 4 - Mixed By D Kay
Bingo

D Kay takes the reigns for the fourth part in Zinc's Bingo label's mix CDs and delivers a selection that's got more bounce than silly putty. Showcasing the breadth of tracks and producers, both present and forthcoming on the constantly releasing Bingo, the Austrian producer known for his massively varied production style flexes his jump-up muscles on this 21 track mix. Kicking off with his live-o collaboration with Eksman 'Energy', D-Kay sets the tone for a mix that if you don't smile and nod your head to, then your either dead or your raving days are over. Simplicity is the name on a lot of the tracks here, but as plates like Motive's 'Screw Top' or Silver's 'Do or Die' prove, that can sometimes be a very good thing. Sigma's anthem 'All Blue', D Kay's brilliant 'Galaxy' and Nu Balance's 'Bounce' stand out from crowd with their relentless funk while Red Eye's 'When Will It Ever End' and Zinc's 'Piece of Heaven' add a smattering of soul to proceedings. If your jaded and depressed by the 'wall of sound' noise or demonic darkness that's all over D&B right now, then this mix will certainly make you smile and remember why you fell in love with drum & bass in the first place.

Bad Company
Inside The Machine: Redux
BC Recordings

Bad Company's seminal masterpiece resurfaces from the gloried depths of drum & bass history re-mastered and ready to enthrall a new generation of junglists. This time though, it brings along an evil twin of a bonus disc featuring some lost and forgotten tracks that never made it out. The importance of Bad Company and their influence on drum & bass needs little explanation in the pages of ATM but 'Inside the Machine' represents the perfect confluence of everything the collective remain famed for today. 'Inside the Machine' delivered the potential promised by BC's earlier releases and became that rare thing in D&B, a truly classic album. From the timeless splendour of 'Colonies' to the ridiculous funk of 'Trick of the Light' and the warm tech-step filth of 'Sentient' every single track on this LP oozes quality. And that's not even to mention the monstrous 'Brain Scan' and legendary collaboration with Trace on 'Nitrous', both of which were absolutely hammered in the raves of the day. The bonus CD, features 10 more tracks, some genuinely lost for years, some that just never made it beyond dubplate and some, like 'Fuck Miami', that provide an interesting context to the anthems for which the quartet will be remembered in history.

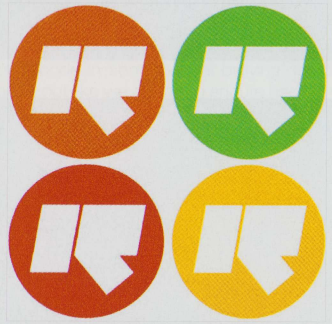
album reviews

Boxcutter
Glyphic
Planet Mu

Finally the wait is over as Boxcutter's second album drops on Planet Mu. Back with his trademark glitchy, electronic malfunction sound, Boxcutter casually mixes deep dub, electronica and dubstep into weighty, other-worldly rhythms, packed with alarming noises and growling, searing sub wave bass. However 'Glyphic' moves towards a different angle than the choppy and highly fragmented arrangements on debut 'Oneric'. This album is much more fluid and relaxed but still contains that feisty, sharp edge. It's as though Mr Cutter has firmly found his sound, comfortably settling into the more abstract side of dubstep. He mixes this up, with the ethereal atmospherics of 'Rusty Break', the floating, darting sub flavour of 'J Dub' and the crazy percussive breaks of 'Kaleid', sounding like a breakcore tune with the reigns on. He even experiments with 2step garage on the warm vocal track 'Foxy' to glowing effect. The best thing about Boxcutter is his vision and ability to make a truly original album. At times dark and brooding, at others uplifting and forward thinking, no two tunes on this album sound similar. Boxcutter takes the roots of dub and electronica and spins a futuristic journey into unchartered waters. Another fine album from Northern Ireland's heaviest talent; god bless you my son.

Various Artists
Fabric Live 37 - Mixed By Caspa & Rusko
Raw Dog

Dubstep has long proven itself to be a forward thinking genre, defying critics that berate its 'monotony' with genre bending artists like The Bug, Pinch, Benga and Kode 9 instigating twisted subs, twinned with interesting and varied rhythms and amazing live sets. This latest Fabric mix, however, is strictly club bound. The mix is reasonably tight; as Caspa & Rusko prove their mixing credentials and selector skills (they do like to mix their own tunes however, as splattered generously all over this mix). From the, deeply pensive, atmospheric tones and creeping wobble bass of Caspa's 'Born to Do It', to the blissfully melancholic 'Cockney Violin', with its deep sub wave winning DJs over everywhere. The sub bass is pushed aside though, making way for the tear out, rapid electrical storm of Rusko's synth fest 'Jahova'. Through rippers like Coki's 'Spongebob' and Distance's high pitched saw wave on 'Chest Plate', to the heavyweight 'Cockney Thug', it's clear that the mix has turned into a standard ragging fest. I love to hear this stuff in the right context, buts it's purely for those massive crowds, craving an instant bass fix. The tunes pampered are mostly great on their own, but this sort of mix, like dubstep DJ of the year N-Type, belongs strictly on the floor.

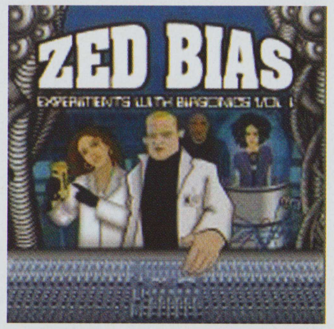


Various Artists
Rinse 02 - Mixed By Skream
Rinse

Rinse FM deliver their next compilation designed to showcase the stations vibrant underground music policy. For those who've tuned into Skream on a Wednesday evening, you'll be aware of the heady mixture of off-key banter and slamming dubstep presented. This CD is merely a snapshot of the show, usually punctuated by a variety of acts and styles both established and up and coming. Within the 24 tracks we have a relentless, abusive mix of Skream penned beasts from the brutality of 'Calous' and the gritty 'Refuel', to the techno penetration of 'Tek A Pil', supported by the jarring 'Crash' and ominous stomp of 'Murderer'. Yet don't be fooled into thinking this is a self absorbed selection, indeed, we are treated to 12 other artists, including Skream's brother from a different mother Benga, DMZ's Coki, the effervescent Rusko & Caspa and real deal, his brother Hijak. The Klaxons make an appearance (although they aren't credited on the sleeve notes, naughty) through Skream's 'It's Not Over' remix, Distance crops up with his bone shaking remix of 'Make Me' and a rather cheeky bootleg of Alicia Keys sneaks on at the end, smoothing out the edges just enough to make the come down that tad easier. It's a shame not to see some newer artist represented on this kinda of platform, but as an insight into Skream and Rinse FM right now, you couldn't get much better.

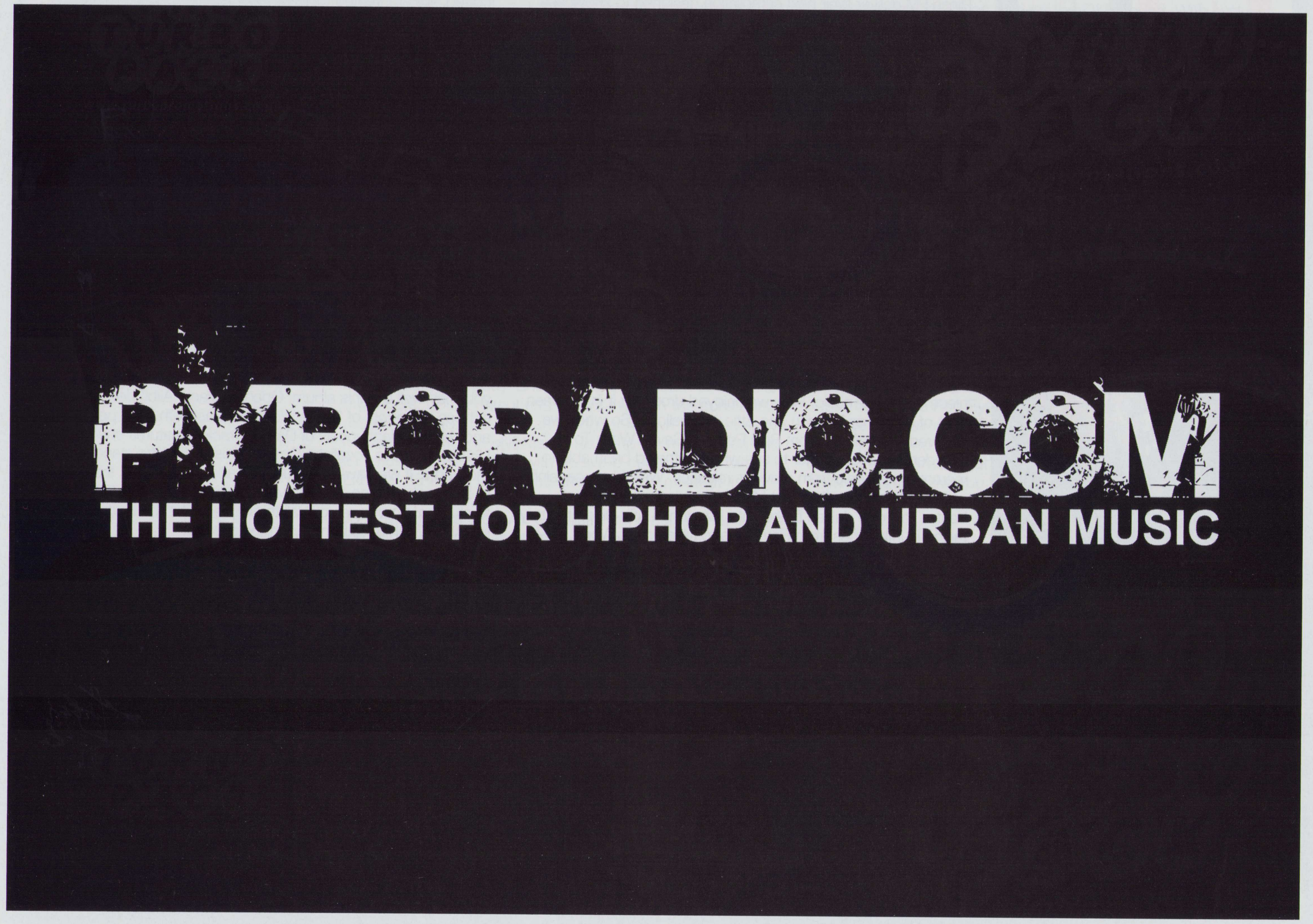
Reel People
Seven Ways To Wonder
Papa Records

Reel People were placed firmly on our radar when they dropped the dance floor smash 'Can't Stop' a couple of years ago. Was it disco, funk or soul? Who cares, it was a brilliant piece of dance music. How we enjoyed dropping it in between a bit of Prince or Bugz In The Attic, marvellous. So when we received the new LP from Reel People, 'Seven Ways To Wonder', we were eager to see whether they'd been able to recreate the magic from previous releases. Well this is certainly a different beast to their last LP, which relied more on 4x4 beats. This one delves further into jazz-funk-Latin-disco territory taking in influences from Roy Ayers to Masters At Work, Stevie Wonder to Incognito and with live performances scheduled in 2008 at Camden's Jazz Café you should be able to gauge that if you have even a passing interest in any of the artists' above you may well like this album. Opening track 'Alibi' definitely echoes the ghost of Stevie Wonder's past with Latin percussion and the excellent vocals of Darien. Track 2 features one of the UK's finest male vocalists, Omar and is one of the standout moments. If we have any grumbles about this LP, its that some of the tracks are so 'schmoove' and sickly that we felt the need to skip past, however, overall the highs better the lows and the live show with a full band promises much.



Zed Bias
Experiments with Biasonics Vol.1
Sick Trumpet

So, what exactly are 'biasonics' then? I'm guessing that it's the science of biased information, of structured thinking and genre hibernation. Surprisingly, Zed Bias's album does exactly what it says on the tin; an experimental mix of genre cruising anthems, fusing together elements from all genres. From dubstep to broken beat, it's like Giles Peterson mutated together with Mary Anne Hobbs. Pretty scary thought, I know, but it's all good, trust. From the stomping squelch of niche house banger 'Time' (which has already received props from the above mentioned selector's), to the guitar riff sampled 'Bare Knuckle', featuring spits from Manchester's finest, Broke 'n' English, snippets of a mad professor creating a living, breathing monster of a bassline are thrown in between the defying mixture of influences. 'Smile From Within' sounds a bit handbag but still contains a funky, plucky groove line. 'Recognizable Forms', an NY meets north England club banger, serves big whip crack snares and clappy, drumming beats, whilst tech-jazz meets house rhythm in 'Cottonmouth'. It's a great album to get psyched for a night out pounding the beat, with Zed gently dipping his toe into different pools, but for me it's all a bit housey. However the mix remains tight and serves as a perfect example of how an eclectic but niche house album should be made.



game reviews

Compiled by: **Shorn Reset**

NEWS

STREET FIGHTER 4

Release: TBA
Developer: Capcom

There have been rumours and YouTube movies flying around for a minute now but within the last couple of weeks Capcom have officially announced development on Street Fighter 4. We got sent Capcom's press release for the game and there's some decent information in it, I guess, 'the game's graphics are polygonal', 'There will be new moves, new characters', '6 button layout' – blah blah'...

What we really wanted confirmed is A: will it be a 3D Tekken style affair, in which case, MASSIVE FAIL and B: what's up with the combo situation? With the processing power of today's consoles what's to stop the developers coding 5 hundred billion hit combo's that take three weeks to complete and leave your opponent a red-faced, sweating, quivering, humiliated mess with broken thumbs and tears streaming down his (her) face in front of the whole arcade (your living room) like back in the day? That would be fucking A, especially if Capcom confirm online play. Maybe they could code in some 'virtual bullying' for the loser of each bout like we all had to endure back in the arcade days. Kids these days don't even know they are born.

GRAND THEFT AUTO IV

Release: TBA
Developer: Rockstar Games

Rockstar have released the third in the series of preview movies for their highly anticipated Grand Theft Auto IV release. With the GTA series becoming the company's flagship product Rockstar aren't messing about or leaving anything to chance, with this version of the game they're pulling out all the stops to make sure it's as well-received as the previous versions have been.

With a game as anticipated as a new addition to the GTA franchise even a trailer release becomes an event, with each given a publicised release date and receiving reviews across the industry. This, the third preview movie entitled 'Move Up Ladies' takes us deeper into the back-story, following on from 'Looking for that special someone' in various ways. If you check out the screenshot you can see the level of detail is immense. Individual streetlights and the glow from each apartment you pass reflect off the bonnet of your car when you drive in low-light character detail is ridiculous, peep the guy with his Tyson-style face tattoo's, it's the first time I've ever seen a man with a face tattoo and not felt like laughing my arse off.

We also get taken further into Niko's life and introduced to his cousin Roman. Roman seems a bit of a ladies man and his reputation as the 'lover' of the pair as opposed to Niko's 'fighter' is cemented when a glorious CGI gangster bitch-slaps him whilst they are in a club. That's right IN A CLUB. Rockstar are claiming that you are going to be able to enter more building's than ever before and if the interiors in this preview are anything to go on this can be no bad thing. As for a release date on the game Rockstar aren't saying anything they haven't said already, that will be pretty much nothing at all then.

REVIEWS

MEDAL OF HONOUR 2

Release: Out now
Developer: IGN
Formats: PSP, Wii

The original M.O.H was one of our favorite war simulation games back in the prehistoric Game-Cube days. Back then the 32-bit graphics looked super-realistic and coupled with the meticulously created maps and sound effects we really felt like 'one of the boys', fresh off on the boat from Blighty, stuck overseas in Nazi-infested mainland Europe, probably never to return. One thing we have learnt from computer games is that war is a terrible and harrowing thing that benefits nobody except corrupt governments, evil dictators and people that play the videogames based on the conflict from the safety of their bedrooms years later (us). IGN have shipped out M.O.H 2 for a winter release across the Wii and the PSP, the Wii version does have zapper support and the PSP version can be played, whilst crawled up into a ball, in a ditch somewhere for that added sense of dread and despair. For those of you that are still sore about Vanguard and its shoddy control mechanism will be pleased to know that this is one of the first things IGN have focused on setting straight in this all-new version.

CALL OF DUTY 4

Release: Out now
Developer: Activision
Formats: 360, PS3, PC

Sticking with the staple themes of war and violence we really need to mention we finally got hold of C.O.D 4. Seriously this game is cooler than heroin and more addictive than crack, it's THAT good. Pretty much every single time I fire up my 360 my whole buddy list is already online and gunning each other into respawn hell, all with the beautifully rendered, ultra-realistic graphics you would expect from this franchise. Of course a lot of you D&B producers/heads out there are going to be rocking the PC version as when it comes to first person shooters any fool knows PC option = the correct option (sorry kids). I've been running this on an E6600, with 3 thousand RAMS (sic) with an 8800gts. This runs the whole thing nice and smoothly at a generous 1280x720 resolution with little noticeable lag, even when I'm gunning down like, ten guys at the same time.

One really cool addition is the newly added ability to chuck C4 over walls, blowing unsuspecting chumps into oblivion whilst they stand idly about by the wall not expecting a C4 attack because you couldn't do it before (RTFM guys). The single player campaign mode is okay but not overly great and no where near as fun as online play, I gave it a few goes mainly for the purposes of review but this game rocks too hard online to really give that side of the game much enthusiasm. Especially as the AI robots are predictably dumb as fuck. Maybe at some point everyone will get bored of the slew of multiplayer options, maps and modes of play and we'll all start playing with ourselves again but I doubt that's going to happen for a while. If you're looking for some D&B heads to gun into the ground our friend Terpshicore has compiled a list of DOA grunts you can gun and then gun on the board afterwards (unless you get pwnd of course).

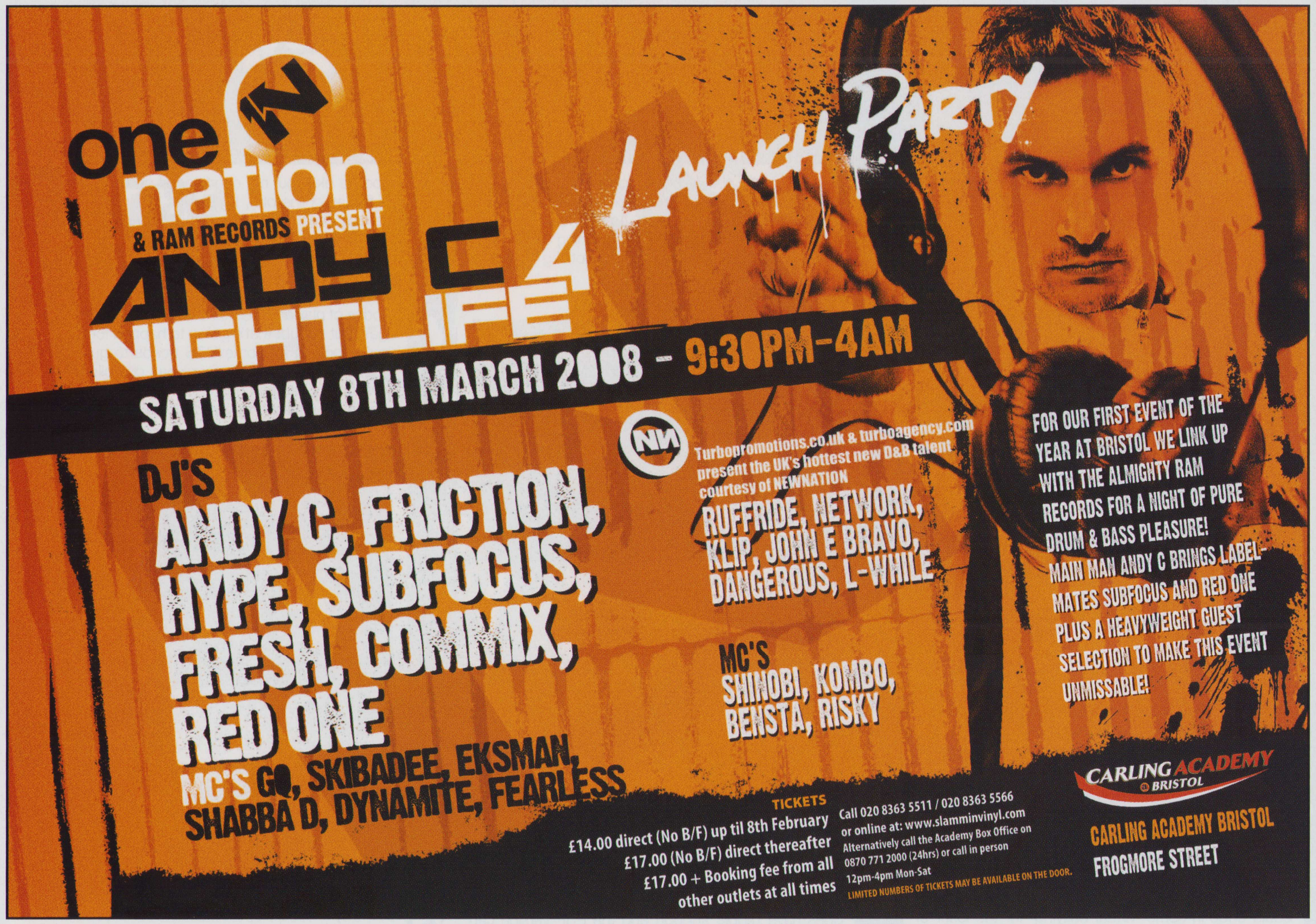
KANE AND LYNCH: DEAD MEN

Release: Out now
Developer: IO Interactive
Formats: 360 / PS3

With the ****storm that's surrounding this release and the revelations in Eidos shall we say, 'dubious' company policy coming to light you couldn't have blamed ATM for not wanting to touch this one with a ten foot virtual barge-pole. Kane and Lynch has been subject to one of the biggest press and advertising campaigns of any game within recent memory so you can see why the developers have been nervous around release and review time, especially with all the rumors of the game being 'boring' with warnings like 'don't believe the hype' flying around all over the place. Of course if I don't give this game a five star rating then I'll probably get fired like all those guys over at Gamespot.com did, so if anyone out there at Eidos is reading this, this game is the best game ATM ever played! (Please don't fire us, please.)

It's seriously the best game we ever played, despite the totally overbearing storyline that manages to completely distract you from playing the game the whole way through but that's great right? It means it's more like a movie than a game. Even though you start out robbing a bank and within about five missions are taking on an entire foreign army and attempting to foil a coup, it's still great and not at all 'weird', 'stupid' or 'confusing' at all. Everybody likes movies and especially movies with a surprise twist so I guess that's great. The control system is also amazing, sure it's impossible to aim at anything farther than a few feet away without missing completely and spraying bullets everywhere but that makes it more of a challenge! Everybody loves a challenge so once again, thumbs up Eidos guys! As is usual in first person shooters the AI is completely retarded, the cops will generally always hang around in the exact same places (directly outside the bank) and always take the same course of action but that's good because it's more like real life. Real life cops are dumb as shit just like the ones in the game, it's not shoddy programming it's 'realism'.

Kane and Lynch does have a great multiplayer mode. That's right mode as opposed to modes. The basic multiplayer game known as 'fragile alliance' revolves around you and up to seven mates becoming a crew and pulling off various robberies, heists and such. There is a feature that allows anybody in the crew to turn on the group at any time and make off with all the money collected so far. This adds an element of trust to the game and trust among virtual criminals is in pretty short supply, so most games will inevitably result in mindless gun battles amongst your own crew with everything ending up bloody and dead like at the end of Reservoir Dogs. This mode only really comes into itself with the 360 version that allows users to use the chat headsets thus making the 360 version the better purchase for those of you with both machines. Those of you that only own a PS3, sorry I guess you lose out on this one.



diggin' in the crates

ATLANTIC CONNECTION is a smooth operator who can roll out soulful and deep drum and bass with the best of 'em. In 2008 if you want to keep an eye on hot talent, watch out for his 'Skeleton Man' and 'Hangin' On' tracks amongst many others. Don't sleep on this West Coast producer and check out his top inspirations below.

PFM
One & Only
I decided to start with this, because it was the track that kicked it all off for me. It was the first time I'd ever heard seductive music, and I was completely hooked. I'm not sure if it's the way that "You're my one and only" vocal sits on top of those incredibly smooth and heavenly beats or how the bass punches during the first breakdown and indicates technology, but I was hooked.

Bob Marley
Trenchtown Rock
When I listen to music I have to see it as well, and musically, no one was ever better adept at creating visual music than Bob Marley. "One good ting about music, when it hits, you feel no pain." This was just one of many Bob tracks which have inspired me through the years. Whether it be a personal battle or a social one, Bob's music is always good to lead the way.

Kanye West
Touch The Sky
Something a bit newer, but none the less a modern classic. Produced by Just Blaze and sampling Curtis Mayfield, 'Touch The Sky' for me, is about reaching those goals, and never stopping till your at the top. The whole tune is escorted with those huge horns and crashing breaks. Lupe makes his major debut on this track as well; a modern classic!

Madonna
Secret Garden
A rarer B side off the Erotica album, 'Secret Garden' is just that, a secret escape on the album that utilises classic breaks and lush samples with that 'billion dollar voice' over the top. I listened to this a lot when I was on the islands off the coast of Belize.

Mazzy Star
Fade Into You
I first heard this when I was 15 and it still makes me feel the same way today. Melancholy in its purest form. Lullaby guitars echo in the distance, and soft poetic vocals roll it along with retro reverb. This track really captured the mid 90s grunge scene I think, definitely a track I still enjoy.

Notorious B.I.G.
Juicy
1994, 'Ready to Die'. I was digging through YouTube.com the other day and ran across this video. It's a story of success, straight street anthem, rising up from the darkness for the better but never forgetting where you came from.

Talib Kweli ft. Kanye West & Roy Ayers
In the Mood / Hot Thing Video
In the mood is a classic piece of hip hop off Talib's most recent album 'Eardrum'. A throwback, 'In the Mood' effortlessly captures the essence of hip hop and blends it with vibes of 70 years ago. The music video ('Hot Thing'/'In the Mood') is like an HP Pavilion commercial but more creative.

4 Hero
Les Fleur 9x9 (Marcus Intalex & ST Files Remix)
This drum and bass track was HUGE! Released in 2002, this track got hammered on every dance floor for months. The drums in this are just massive, and it was one of the first records I heard with drums that punched that hard but were so clean at the same time. Coupled with the smooth vocal, that's almost reminiscent of Bible school, it makes for some good listening.

Justice
D.A.N.C.E
Kicking off the French revolution that has evolved into this massive movement commonly (un)known as electro/indie/dance punk/dancerock/disco revival/ whatever, Justice's 'D.A.N.C.E' has just exploded into the mainstream and its now on every radio station around. The tune? Cheeky. Cheeky. Cheeky. But it's so catchy you don't care its fun to dance too and that's the point.

Janet Jackson ft. Q Tip
Got 'Till it's Gone
Probably the sexiest song in history, Janet's 'Got 'Till Its Gone' produced by J Dilla, is a sensual piece of art that features samples from Joni Mitchell and a slick rap from Q Tip (Tribe). The whole track just has this blanket of softness to it where you could crank it but it will never hurt your ears. That's good music.

BEST OF BRITISH
Canvas, London

The last ever rave at Bagley's went off with a bang. The venue was literally packed to the rafters with ravers all loving the fat beats across all four arenas. Despite the freezing temperatures outside it was a wicked atmosphere and a fitting goodbye to a venue that has played host to the some of the biggest events on the scene. Kicking things off in the main arena was DJ Friller b2b D4orm, who together with Flyte and Fleximus delivered a sick set to get the crowd hype rising right from the start.

R-Type and Swan-E were the next to step up and the Best of British veterans did not disappoint, playing a heavy set with some big tune selections. Chase and Status delivered one of the best sets of the night with some dark dub plates busting up the dance floor in the main arena while Fearless and Fatman D raised the crowd hype through the roof with some tight lyrical flows.

In the jungle room Jumpin Jack Frost played a wicked set packed full of classic tunes and the Ratpack followed suit in their characteristic style. The best set of Best Of British was definitely Ray Keith b2b Nicky Blackmarket, true legends behind the turntables joined by Skibadee and Det for an absolutely rinse out set that was a fitting tribute to what has been one of the major venues on the scene. Overall Best of British was a great night with loads of variety across four different styles and I for one will definitely be reaching the next one!

MOS DEF LIVE
Carling Academy, London

As you get older you start seeing more of your musical inspirations performing live and you start to realise that not all of them are as legendary as the pedestal you put them on. When Mos Def came to London, late last year, we were more than a little excited about seeing the man who brought to the world Black Star (with Talib Kweli) and one of our all-time favourite LPs, 'Black On Both Sides'. Would he live up to our expectations? Damn right he did.

Having performed at Shepherd's Bush Empire the previous Friday, we caught the show in the more intimate – and jam packed – setting of the Islington Carling Academy. With a capacity of around 700 people this is the sort of venue where you can see the whites in the performer's eyes, which, when it comes to a hip-hop show is what you need.

Hats off to DJ Vadim, accompanied by One Self, as they did a tidy little warm-up on the night. Then anticipation and people's patience got a little twisted. It was a Sunday night and approaching 11pm before Mos Def exploded onto the stage. Backed simply by 2 DJs, it was a show that seemed to be have a start and an end but in the middle was made up as they went along, no bad thing.

Without a live band or expensive pyrotechnics Mos Def paced and controlled the stage like a pro. His older material obviously got the biggest response of the night, but his new stuff showed he's still got a big part to play in a world where hip-hop hasn't got that many true legends still at the top of their game. Shouts of "My Sound Is The Champion Sound" and "I Am The Boogieman", came regularly from the showman and he talked to the crowd on the regs commenting on London and joking that people had been smoking some heavy chronic at one slightly below par response to his call.

The finale was the highlight: Ms Fat Booty, Sex, Love & Money and Umi Says sounded just as good live as on the recordings and ensured Mos Def retained his legendary status in our minds.

WEEKLY EVENTS

MOVEMENT @ BAR RUMBA, 36 Shaftsbury Avenue, London, W1. Every Thursday. 8pm-3.30am. £6. Info: 020 7735 7577. Residents + guests on rotation.

SWERVE @ THE END, West Central Street, London WC1. 22.30pm-3am. £5NUS/£6. Every Wednesday. D&B / Liquid Funk with Fabio, Bailey, Flight plus guests each week.

JUNGLIST ALLIANCE PRESENTS: BASS BAR @ DQ / THE LATE BAR, Every Thursday. Fitzwilliam Street, Sheffield, Guest DJ's / MC's Local and international. 9pm-3am. Entry £3

CHEEKY MONDAY @ WINSTON AMSTERDAM, winston kingdom, warmoesstraat, centrum, amsterdam. 10 - 4 every monday! ?5 on the door. www.cheekymonday.com. Residents: adi-j, loco, sinistah, kaper, and mc lenny len + special guest djs from the international dnb and jungle scene.

XPRESSION @ BAR VINYL, 6 Inverness St London, NW1 7HJ. 8pm-Midnight. FREE ENTRY. Every Wednesday from 8pm till midnight Dymond & guests will be showcasing the freshest beats in all styles of D&B without discrimination. xpressiondnb@hotmail.co.uk / (0)207 482 5545 / www.myspace.com/xpressiondnb / info@barvinyl.com / www.barvinyl.com.

JANUARY LISTINGS

FRIDAY 11TH JANUARY
STIMULUS @ SMACK, 5-9 Tavistock Street, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5PJ. 10.30pm-3am. £6 all night. 01926 422223 / www.myspace.com/stimulusdnb. Simon Bassline Smith, Chase & Status, Cyantific, Caution, Samas, MC Algar, MC PM, Messy MC.

SATURDAY 12TH JANUARY
LOWDOWN VS CRYSTAL FORMZ @ THE PURPLE TURTLE, 9 Gun street, Reading RG1 2JR. 9-4am. Free entry. www.lowdowndnb.com. Resident dj's EQ, Dynamic, Rapid, Bedlum, C4, Rosco & B-ill. resident MC's: Flewid & Jolla. Special Guest DJ's Carlos & Raar.

FRIDAY 18TH JANUARY
DETONATE @ PLUG, 14- 16 Matilda Street, Sheffield, S1 4QD. Live, Earth & Neutral rooms. History of D&B: Mickey Finn & MC $pyda, TK b2b Stav with MC E-LL (Ny Sushi Classics set), Transit Mafia, Wagz. Dubstep: Rust, Deadman, Benga. Doors 10.30pm. £5 adv. Age 18+. www.the-plug.com. 0114 276 2676.

SPHERICAL SOUNDS @ THE PRESSURE POINT, 33 Richmond Place, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 9NA. 23.30 > 04.30. £3+BF £4 On the door. 07716459270. sphericalsounds@hotmail.co.uk Tickets from Dance 2 01273220023, Rounder Records 01273 325440 and Resident. 01273 606312. DJ's Kosine, Chaos Theory, Spherical and Laminar. MC's Buzz & Kernel.

TECH:NOLOGY 3RD BIRTHDAY @ THE RHYTHM FACTORY, 16-18 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1EW. 10pm - 6am. £10. 07862 112038 / www.technologydnb.com. Room 1: Dom & Roland, Loxy (2 hours), Break, Kryptic Minds, EBK & Nocturnal, Manifest, Verb. Room 2: DJ E & Impact, Solidindustry & Sistem, Nebulus & Data, Blal & Felon, FD & Tasha, Sigha, Wreak, DJ FT. MC's: 2Shy, AD, Killa B, I.D, Contact, Blackeye, Havok.

SATURDAY 19TH JANUARY
LOWDOWN VS STEP:ONE @ THE PURPLE TURTLE, 9 Gun street, Reading RG1 2JR. 9-4am. Free entry. www.lowdowndnb.com. Resident dj's EQ, Dynamic, Rapid, Bedlum, C4, Rosco & B-ill. resident MC's: Flewid & Jolla. Special Guest DJ's representing Step:One.

FRIDAY 25TH JANUARY
PARADISE OPENING PARTY PART TWO @ PARADISE FACTORY, 112-116 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 7EN. High Contrast, Logistics, Skream, Kode 9, Rich Reason, Bass Camp DJs. 10pm – 4am. £10 advance / £12 door. Tickets: 0161 832 1111 / ticketline.co.uk. Info: 0161 835 3518

NEWWAVE @ PLAN B BASEMENT, 418 Brixton Road, Brixton, SW9 7AY. 9pm-5am. free before 11pm, £6 before midnight, £8 thereafter. www.newwavemusic.co.uk, www.plan-brixton.co.uk, kim@newwavemusic.co.uk. DJ B-One, Zero Tolerance, Messy Mc, Newwave DJ competition winner.

HERBAL SESSIONS @ THE SYNDICATE SUPERCLUB, 130-140 Church Street, Blackpool, FY1 3PR. 21:00 - 05:00. £10. www.myspace.com/herbalsessionsofficial, www.herbalsessions.com, www.ticketline.co.uk. Scratch Perverts, Grooverider, Ken Evil and Subliminal, Lost Property, Mike Howarth, Symbiosis Sound System, Jonny Cruel Shoes, Persona (live), M16 Rythmic Potes (live), plus guests.

SATURDAY 26TH JANUARY
LOWDOWN VS UPROAR - NSUC @ THE PURPLE TURTLE, 9 Gun street, Reading RG1 2JR. 9-4am. Free entry. www.lowdowndnb.com. Resident dj's EQ, Dynamic, Rapid, Bedlum, C4, Rosco & B-ill. resident MC's: Flewid & Jolla. Special Guest DJ's representing NSUC.

FEBRUARY LISTINGS

FRIDAY 1ST FEBRUARY
FIZZY FRIDAY - OH BAR!, 111 - 113, Camden Highstreet, NW1, London. 8.00pm - 4.00am. Free entry before 9.00pm - £5 after all night. 07841 465186. wednesday@fizzyliquid.com, www.fizzyliquid.com - www.myspace.com/fizzyliquid. Suburuko, Storm, Future-thinkin, Soul ID, Mr Joseph, Caspar and Izzy. MC's: Shylo, Deefa, V double E, Cliche.

SATURDAY 2ND FEBRUARY
CHIBUKU @ THE BARFLY, 90 Seel Street, Liverpool, L1 4BH. Theatre Respect to Electric Chair, Special Guest: Francois K, The Unabombers. Loft: Playaz: DJ Hype, Hazard, Futurebound, Bar, Benga, Rich Furness. 10pm-3am. £10 advance / NUS £13 other. Info: 0151 708 5051. Ticketline: 0161 832 1111. www.chibuku.com

FRIDAY 8TH FEBRUARY
IN SESSION @ PARADISE FACTORY, 112 – 116 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 7EN. Adam Freeland, The Freestylers, Mary Anne-Hobbs, Digital Mystikz, Rich Reason. 10pm – 4am. £8 advance / £9 NUS / £10 others. Tickets: 0161 832 1111 / ticketline.co.uk. Info: 0161 835 3518. www.112-116princessstreet.co.uk.

STIMULUS @ SMACK, 5-9 Tavistock Street, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5PJ. 10.30pm-3am. £6 all night. 01926 422223 / www.myspace.com/stimulusdnb. Grooverider, Xample, Caution, Samas, Steeler, MC Algar, MC PM, Messy MC.

SATURDAY 9TH FEBRUARY
DISSIDENT @ CLOCKWORK, 6-10 Stokes Croft, Bristol, BS1 3PR. 10-6am. £8adv/£10 door. www.myspace.com/dissidentfaction. Room 1 - Hive, Cause4Concern, Misanthrop, Sabre, Icicle, Universal. MCs Stapleton, Rage, 2Shy. Room 2 - Smiffy and Destroy, Gyu, Phaeleh, Smiffy, Wascal.

FRIDAY 15TH FEBRUARY
SHOGUN AUDIO VS METALHEADZ @ THE END, 18 West Central Street, London, WC1A 1JJ. 10.00-6.00. £13 / £11 NUS. www.endclub.com for tickets. Friction B2B Goldie, Doc Scott B2B Randall, Commix B2B Break, Icicle B2B SpectraSoul. Hosted by Rage, Fats, SP:MC + I.D.

DETONATE 9TH BIRTHDAY @ PLUG, 14- 16 Matilda Street, Sheffield, S1 4QD. Detonate 9th Birthday! Roni Size Reprazent (Live), Skream. Lynx. Transit Mafia. Rust. MC's Dynamite & Eksman. 10.30pm. £8 adv. Age 18+. www.the-plug.com. 0114 276 2676

IN SESSION WITH APE @ PARADISE FACTORY, 112 – 116 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 7EN. Andy C (3hr set), DJ Craze, Nightmares on Wax S/System, Rich Reason. 10pm – 4am. £8 advance / £9 NUS / £10 others. Tickets: 0161 832 1111 / ticketline.co.uk. Info: 0161 835 3518. www.112-116princessstreet.co.uk.

WHIPLASH @ SHAKESPEARIENCE, Waterside, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warks. 9:30PM > 2:30AM. £7 All Night. www.myspace.com/whiplashuk / 07881702905. Bryan Gee, Mistress Mo, Inspire, Hena-C, D-Vice, TekSteppa, DJ RT, MC Algar, MC Doddzy.

SATURDAY 16TH FEBRUARY
CHIBUKU @ THE BARFLY, 90 Seel Street, Liverpool, L1 4BH. Roni Size presents: REPRAZENT – live feat Dynamite, UV, Onalee, Si John, Netik, No Fakin. Loft: 20 years of the Sub Club, Harri and Domenic, Emmma, Bar, Kissy Sell Out. 10pm – 3am. £10 advance / NUS £13 other. Info – 0151 708 5051. Ticketline: 0161 832 1111. www.chibuku.com

FRIDAY 22ND FEBRUARY
IN SESSION WITH CHIBUKU @ PARADISE FACTORY, 112 – 116 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 7EN. Riton, Adventures Close to Home DJs, Netik, & more TBA. 10pm – 4am. £8 advance / £9 NUS / £10 others. Tickets: 0161 832 1111 / ticketline.co.uk. Info: 0161 835 3518. www.112-116princessstreet.co.uk

FRIDAY 29TH FEBRUARY
IN SESSION WITH METROPOLIS @ PARADISE FACTORY, 112 – 116 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 7EN. friction + ps mc 2hr set, randall - 2hr set, fresh + mc ivory, commixs, clipz, marcus intalex, prophecy, mark od. mcs tonn piper + skeez. 10pm – 4am. £8 advance / £9 NUS / £10 others. Tickets: 0161 832 1111 / ticketline.co.uk. Info: 0161 835 3518. www.112-116princessstreet.co.uk.

NEWWAVE @ PLAN B BASEMENT, 418 Brixton Road, Brixton, SW9 7AY. 9pm-5am. free before 11pm, £6 before midnight, £8 thereafter. www.newwavemusic.co.uk, www.plan-brixton.co.uk, kim@newwavemusic.co.uk. DJ B-One, Messy Mc, Newwave DJ competition winner.

MOVEMENT - JORDAN V BIRTHDAY BASH
Bar Rumba, London

The ATM crew were out in force for the birthday celebrations of Movement and V Records main man, Jordan V. After a few cheap pints somewhere in the seedy streets of Soho, it was down to the venue, where a large cue snaked down the road towards Leicester Square, but as the birthday boy had just arrived (and received birthday cards and the odd kiss from girls in the cue) we managed to roll through into the legendary basement space known as Bar Rumba.

Early doors Andy Mystic dropped some deeper, soulful numbers alongside a steady amount of wobbly flavours and the crowd started working up a sweat on the dancefloor. Taking up a strategic position next to the bar, the ATM All-Star Editorial team (Mark OD, Franjunglepunk and Ben Wilmott) worked our way through a good few rum and cokes as Bryan G pummelled his way through a crowd-pleasing set; highlights included the soundsystem punisher 'Disco Dodo' and a V/Full Cycle blast from the past with 'Days' (not 'Gays' as one tourist put it ha-ha) and 'Drop Bear'. Sick.

Later on Jordan V took to the decks and played fast-paced dancefloor action that had the now heaving club going wild. Plenty of industry heads were in attendance, Tali and Zero Tolerance, amongst others, looked like they were enjoying themselves. Out back in the bar area, the beats were a mixture of funk and hip-hop and plenty of people were chilling out and enjoying the less hectic tempo.

Running every Thursday night, whatever the weather, Movement is a drum and bass institution. Celebrating their 11th birthday in January, they've got killer line-ups and a reasonable door charge of 5-7 pounds. ATM will be hosting a special event at Movement on February 7th 2008 with Marcus Visonary (Digital Soundbwoy), Nicky Blackmarket, Ray Keith, Mark OD, R Type and more.

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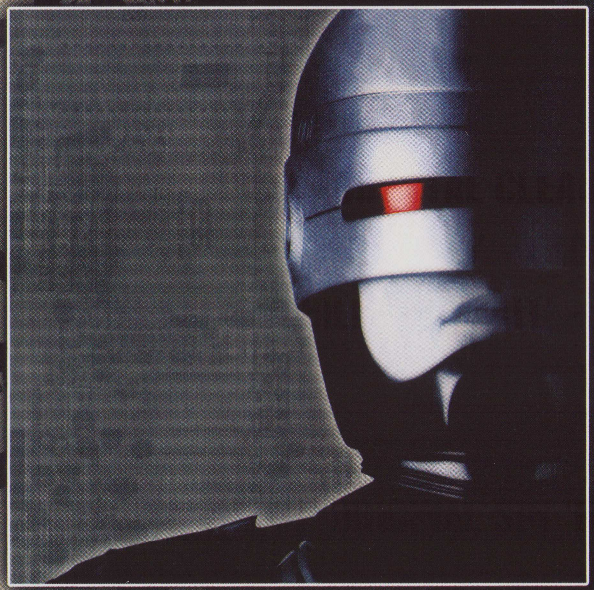

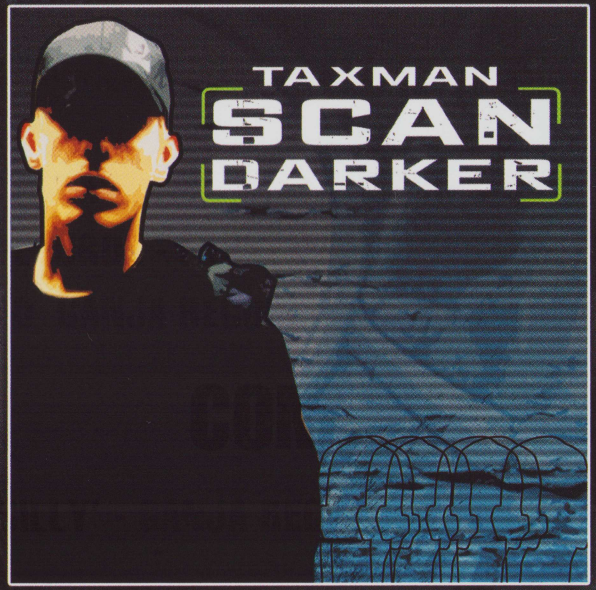

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